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JULY 2026
ISSUE NO.505
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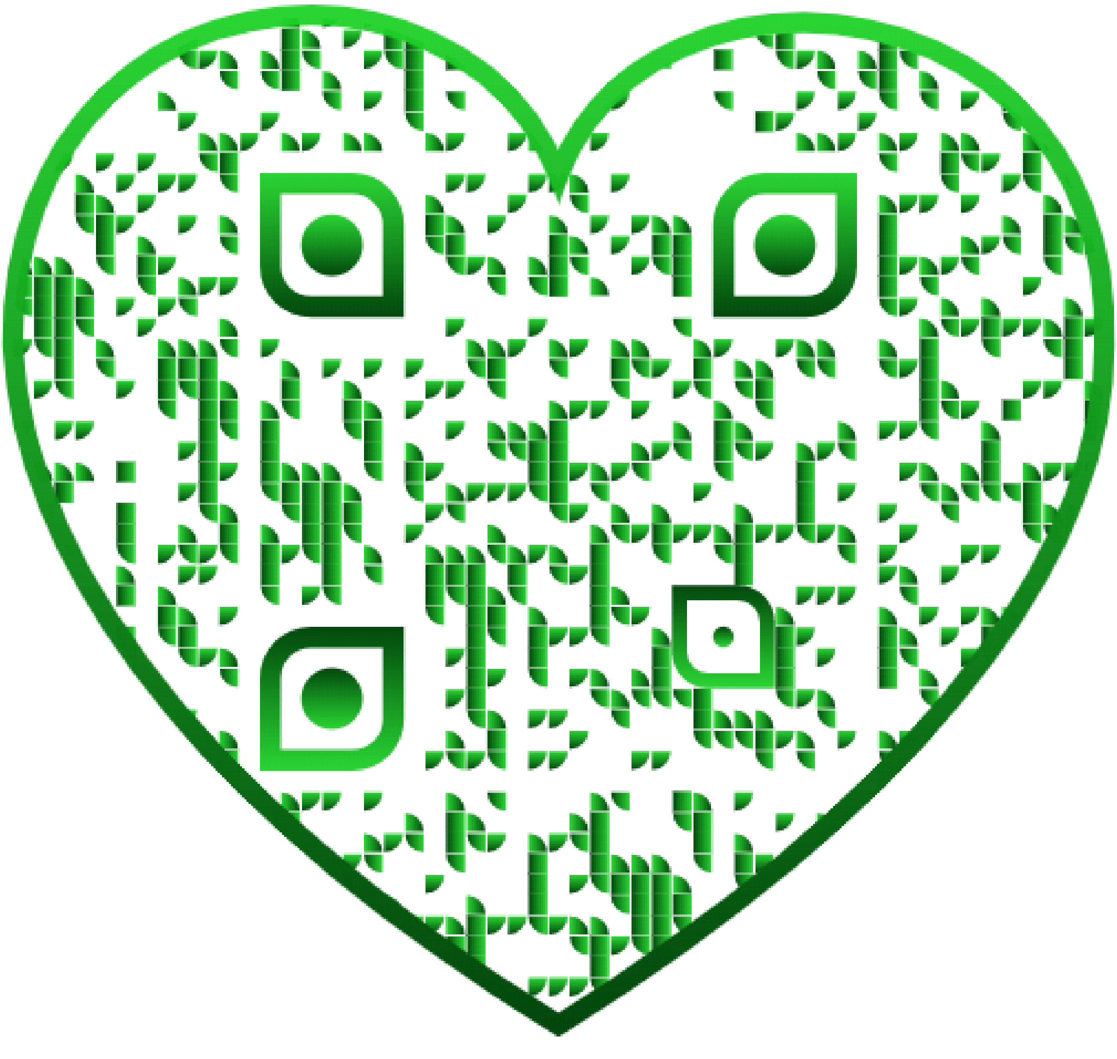

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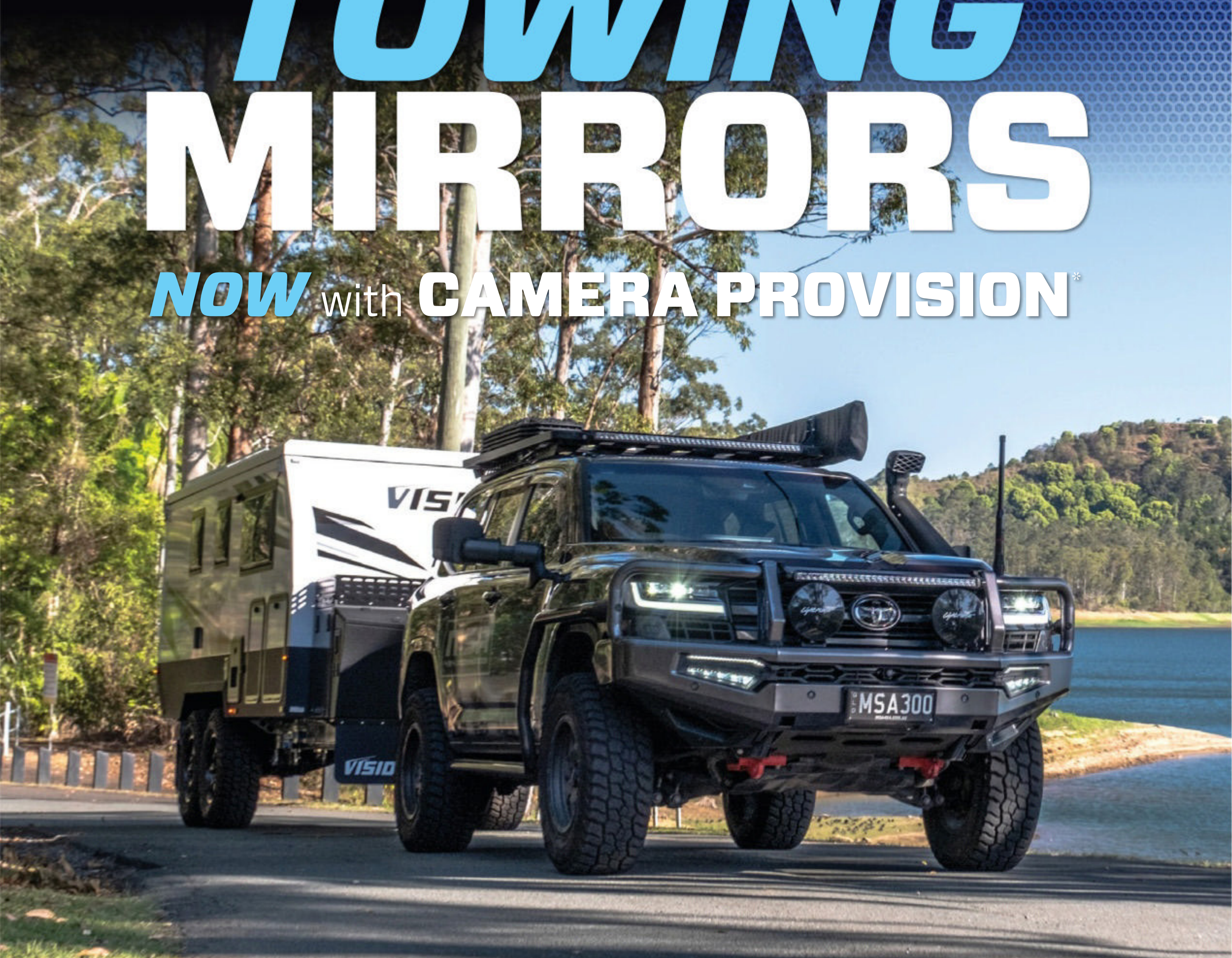

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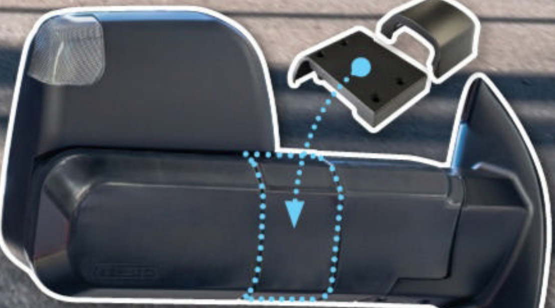

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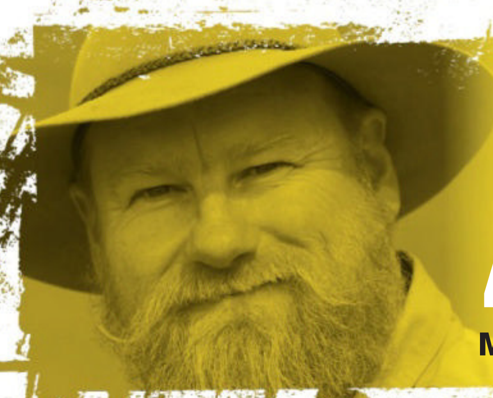

4WORD

MATT RAUDONIKIS

HOW DID WE GET TO THIS?

With all of the changes happening so quickly in the automotive world it has me posing the above question and thinking are we really any better off?

Look back 50 years and we had quality Australian-made passenger cars that could take families to most parts of Australia… and at a time when there were a lot less sealed roads than there are today. Today's passenger cars would have no hope of doing such a job and even the so-called adventure SUVs would be shedding parts on the first track.

If your adventures led you further than a two-wheel drive sedan could manage you had simple Land Rovers, Landcruisers, Patrols or even a Jeep 4x4 to get you where very few others were travelling at the time.

Swing back to present day and there are a lot more people wandering the wide brown land over well-trodden and sealed tracks, in all sorts of modern 4x4 vehicles. The trouble is, a lot of these new vehicles coming to market are not cut out for such work. Maybe the manufacturers of such new vehicles should be thankful that the outback roads are getting better.

Even the most basic of new 4x4s are loaded with electronics, and they are overweight and over complicated.

The number of features and novelties on the dashboards of new vehicles is ridiculous. There are more buttons on the steering wheels of some new cars than there was on the tiller of the space shuttle. Deciphering what should be a simple task like operating cruise control for the first time requires familiarisation and stopping the vehicle to find the right buttons. Sure, you get used to them after a while, but do they really need to be there? No!

And these are the functions that do have actual buttons and dials, unlike so many new vehicles that hide them all in the touchscreen, requiring the driver to take his/her eyes off the road and search through menus to make simple adjustments like cabin temperature. Something that a simple knob connected to the heater tap by cables always did very well.

And this is before we get into multiple drive modes and vehicle electrification. EVs bring nothing useful to off-road 4x4s, just adding more complexity and weight to vehicles; two things that are the enemy of any bush tourer. It's just something that is being forced upon us by politicians and others with no idea about what we really need.

All you really need is a reliable drivetrain with triple locking diffs, compliant flexible suspension and a set of good tyres. It's no wonder that the prices of simple old 4x4s are skyrocketing as they gain popularity.

Matt

4X4 AUSTRALIA
"4x4s, the places you can take them, and the gear to get you there"

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ADVANCING MOTION

CANNON PHEV CONQUERS BEER O'CLOCK HILL

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GWM MAKES HISTORY AS ITS FLEET, INCLUDING THE CANNON ALPHA PHEV, CONQUERS THE INFAMOUS BEER O'CLOCK HILL.

GWM has successfullyscaled Beer O'Clock Hillat The Springs 4x4 Park in Queensland.

A total of three GWM vehicles – the Cannon Alpha PHEV, Cannon XSR diesel and Tank 300 diesel – reached the summit in a show of strength for GWM, a brand out to prove it should no longer be underestimated when the going gets rough. All three of the vehicles were essentially showroom-stock, save for the addition of Cooper all-terrain tyres.

By reaching the summit, the Cannon Alpha PHEV made history by becoming the first PHEV of any kind to ascend Beer O'Clock Hill. Powered by GWM's Hi4-T platform, the system combines a 2.0-litre turbocharged petrol engine (180kW/380Nm) with a 120kW electric motor (400Nm) to deliver a combined output of 300kW and 750Nm. It uses a nine-speed automatic transmission with full-time 4WD.

In addition, the Cannon XSR became the second full production-spec vehicle ever to officially conquer Beer O'Clock Hill, following in the footsteps of the Ineos Grenadier. The Cannon XSR is powered by a 2.4-litre single-turbo diesel engine, producing 135kW and 480Nm and paired with a nine-speed automatic transmission.

Located within the Springs 4x4 Adventure Park in Queensland, the technically demanding 100m ascent features gradients of up to 50 degrees, three separate rock steps, and a difficult rock ledge as steerers approach the summit.

It's a climb that has caused plenty of vehicular damage over years, according to the park's owner, Lucas Bree: "I reckon Beer O'Clock Hill has caused hundreds of thousands of dollars in vehicle damage over the years.

"[It has] shut down some of the most heavily modified rigs I've seen, so watching showroom-spec GWM vehicles, including a plug-in hybrid, make it to the top has completely changed my view of the brand," Bree said.

Check out our review of the Cannon Alpha PHEV in this issue of the magazine. 4X4

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TOYOTA TO PAUSE LC70 PRODUCTION

LANDCRUISER 70 SERIES PRODUCTION TO HALT AS TOYOTA TARGETS NEW EMISSIONS STANDARDS

Toyota will pause production of its LandCruiser 70 Series later this year to update the vehicle in line with new emissions regulations.

The production pause is expected to occur in September, though reports suggest Toyota has sufficient stock to meet consumer demand during the hiatus.

This update is in response to ADR 80/04 (Australian Design Rule 80/04 – Emission Control for Heavy Vehicles), which was formally legislated on 20 February 2023. The rule introduces new emissions standards for heavy vehicles and applies to all M (passenger) and N (goods) category vehicles with a Gross Vehicle Mass (GVM) exceeding 3500kg.

ADR 80/04 mandated that – from 1 November 2024 – all new heavy vehicle models approved and supplied to Australia for the first time must comply with ADR 80/04.

Phase two of the ADR mandates that – from 1 November 1 2025 – all heavy vehicles supplied to Australia, including existing models, must meet the new emissions standards.

To meet these standards, ADR 80/04 requires the use of advanced emissions control technologies, including Selective Catalytic Reduction (SCR) and Diesel Particulate Filters (DPF). AdBlue, a urea-based fluid, will play a crucial role in helping diesel vehicles meet these stricter emissions standards – it's used in SCR systems to reduce nitrogen oxide emissions by up to 90 per cent.

As Australia transitions to adopt Euro 6 and even stricter Euro 6d standards, AdBlue will become a nessacary evil for light commercial vehicles.

GWM TANK 300 MUSCLES UP; LUX PETROL AND HYBRID AXED

TOWING CAPACITY BOOSTED TO 3000KG, BUT TANK 300 LUX PETROL AND HYBRID DITCHED IN FAVOUR OF DIESEL DEMAND

The GWM Tank 300 has been updated for 2025, with the Chinese marque increasing the towing and payload capacities of both its petrol and hybrid variants.

The towing capacity bump from 2500kg to 3000kg now brings the petrol and hybrid models in line with the Tank 300 diesel, which launched in Australia earlier this year. Payload capacities have increased by a minimum of 600kg across the range.

These improvements have been made possible by the implementation of more than 20 engineering enhancements, including larger front brakes and calipers, strengthened front knuckles, upgraded wheel bearings and a reinforced prop shaft.

GWM has also streamlined its Australian product lineup, axing the Tank 300 Lux grade in both petrol and hybrid configurations. GWM says they have been discontinued to “align with a shift of customer preference towards diesel” with the Tank 300 diesel now accounting for 60 per cent of monthly sales.

The culling of these two models has cut the Tank 300’s Australian lineup to four variants: the Tank 300 Lux (diesel) and the Tank 300 Ultra (petrol, diesel and hybrid).

Despite these update, GWM has left the pricing for its Tank 300 unchanged.

TANK 300 LINEUP AND PRICING

SPECIFICATION	TANK 300 LUX DIESEL	TANK 300 ULTRA PETROL	TANK 300 ULTRA DIESEL	TANK 300 ULTRA HYBRID
DRIVEAWAY PRICE	$47,990	$49,990	$51,990	$56,990
MAX BRAKED TOWING CAPACITY	3000kg	3000kg	3000kg	3000kg
UNBRAKED TOWING CAPACITY	750kg	750kg	750kg	750kg
KERB WEIGHT	2280kg	2155kg	2280kg	2335kg
FRONT & REAR KERB WEIGHT	1270kg / 1010kg	1173kg / 982kg	1270kg / 1011kg	1250kg / 1085kg
MAX FRONT AXLE LOAD	1365kg	1275kg	1365kg	1350kg
MAX REAR AXLE LOAD	1515kg	1490kg	1515kg	1585kg
GROSS VEHICLE MASS (GVM)	2880kg	2765kg	2880kg	2935kg
PAYLOAD	600kg	610kg	600kg	600kg

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TRAVEL BULLETIN

ALL THE LATEST 4X4 NEWS AND EVENTS

Now is the time to get out and about to enjoy this great land and support the communities. Experienced adventurer Ron Moon has listed a few upcoming highlights, as well as essential track info. As always, check with event organisers before locking in your plans.

VISIT THE GRAMPIANS (VIC)

After devastating bushfires the Grampians are back in business and welcoming visitors and travellers. For the four-wheel driver and camper there are a host of places to camp in the national park and in the surrounding area. Most if not all of the iconic day walks in the region are also open again, while the fishing in the many lakes in the area is better than ever. Start at www.parks.vic.gov.au/places-

SOMETHING DIFFERENT IN ALICE (NT)

The Desert Festival Fringe, held in and around Alice Springs, is Central Australia's premier multi-arts festival, bringing the heart of Central Australia to life through music, theatre, dance, storytelling and immersive experiences. Set against the stunning backdrop of Alice Springs, this award- winning festival champions local artists while welcoming national and international acts to the heart of Australia. This year it runs from the 3-20 July and is sure to have something for everyone. Go to www.desfest.com for more information.

WATER PUMPS OUT OF ACTION (WA)

Moonie has been out and about and along the Gunbarrel Highway and is sad to report that most of the hand pumps on the bores out that way, that once provided great water for travellers, are no longer working. However, Georgina Bore, near the junction of the Canning and the Talawana Track, is still providing great water as recently discovered. Most maps still mark the water points so you'll be disappointed when you get to many of them. We'd love to see a 4x4 club or Track Care WA refurbish some of them.

GYMKHANA OUT WEST (NSW)

Way out in western NSW the small historic hamlet of Milparinka is holding its annual Gymkhana on 12 July. It's a packed event with races starting at 8.30am and going all day, with some of the later events including the hammer throw and the tug-of-war. There's catering available all day, the pub will be supplying plenty of cold drinks and the camping ground will be your resting place. Go to: www.facebook.com/MilparinkaGymkhana for the latest updates.

Blinman Mine
Historic Site
The Trail

CAMELS GALORE (QLD)

There are camels galore in Birdsville for the Camel Carnival which this year runs from 8-10 July. It's a brand new event celebrating Birdsville's deep-rooted cameleer heritage and Outback spirit. It's all part of the Camel Trail which starts in Jundah on 5 July and finishes in Winton on 26 July.

Back in Birdsville you can expect camel-inspired attractions, captivating storytelling, vibrant local markets and incredible live music, while the historic pub will be pumping. Go to www.facebook.com/BirdsvilleCamelCarnival for more details.

PAGAN GALA (TAS)

For something completely different you can relive the mid-winter festival atmosphere of our pagan past with the Pagan Gala, where you don your very best pagan wares, paint your face, plait your hair, find your rusty sword and, together with a bunch of friends, head for the Apple Shed. Go to www.williesmiths.com.au/mid-winter-series for more information

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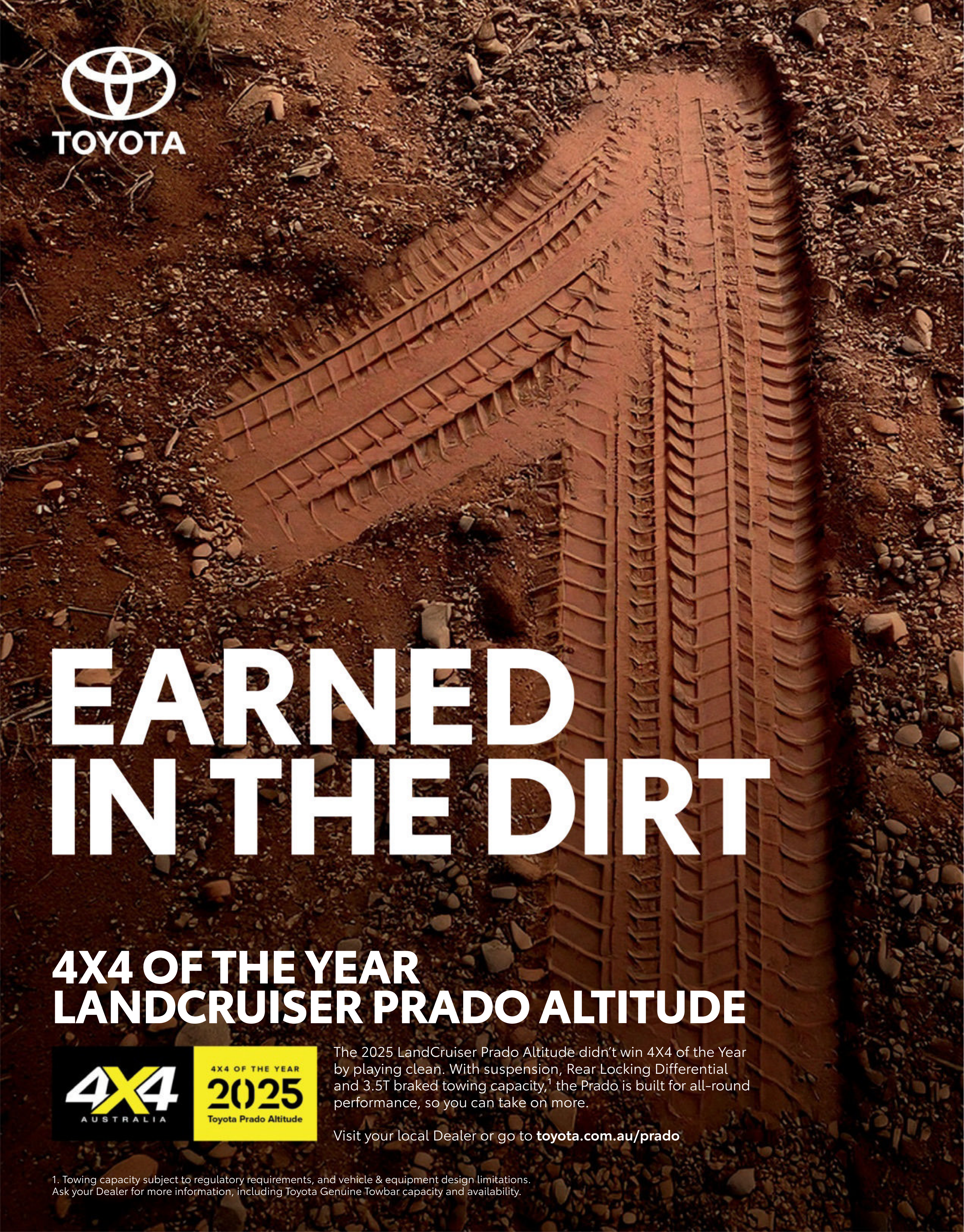
HEART OF THE FLINDERS

Moolooloo Station in the heart of the Flinders Ranges is a short distance north of the historic hamlet of Blinman and it has a rich history for both white settlers and the local Adnyamathanha people. The station has a range of scheduled campsites where there is no need to share with the crowds, while kids camp for free. While dogs are welcome, firearms and motorcycles are not. The property also offers a range of accommodation and

TOYOTA



4X4 OF THE YEAR
LANDCRUISER PRADO ALTITUDE

4X4 AUSTRALIA

4X4 OF THE YEAR
2025
Toyota Prado Altitude

The 2025 LandCruiser Prado Altitude didn't win 4X4 of the Year by playing clean. With suspension, Rear Locking Differential and 3.5T braked towing capacity,[1] the Prado is built for all-round performance, so you can take on more.

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[1] Towing capacity subject to regulatory requirements, and vehicle & equipment design limitations. Ask your Dealer for more information, including Toyota Genuine Towbar capacity and availability.

LAND CRUISER
PRADO
TOYOTA
ALTITUDE
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TOYOTA
YOS 800
OH WHAT A FEELING

WORDS MATT RAUDONIKIS PHOTOS ELLEN DEWAR

WHEELIN' WAGONS

FORD AND TOYOTA CLAIM THESE TWO ARE THE 'OFF-ROAD READY' MODELS IN THEIR RESPECTIVE 4X4 WAGON LINE-UPS. WE HIT THE DIRT TO SEE IF THEY REALLY ARE...

CUW·877
TOYOTA

TOYOTA

Tremor benefits from the extra ground cleance over a regular Everest

These days it seems as though 4x4 wagons play second fiddle to their dual-cab ute siblings when it comes to the purchasing patterns of new-vehicle buyers in Australia. Utes like the Ford Ranger and Toyota HiLux outsell wagons by a long shot and with the added versatility of a cargo tub on the back and the options that opens up, it's not hard to see why.

For many buyers, though, especially those with growing families, the 4x4 wagons from those same vehicle manufacturers would be much better suited to their needs. Wagons generally ride better than utes due to their different rear suspension design – they do away with leaf springs at the back in favour of multi-link coil setups – which also helps them to be better off-road vehicles thanks to more rear-axle articulation over rough terrain. The shorter wheelbase of wagons also benefits them off-road thanks to better ramp-over angle.

There are even greater advantages inside wagon bodies with more rear-seat legroom and greater rake on rear-seat backrests, resulting in more comfort. This is especially important for those with teenage kids or other taller occupants who won't find it comfortable being squeezed into the back of a ute on extended journeys.

Most 4x4 wagons also have a third-row seat that can be handy for smaller children on short trips, but these generally eat into the all-important cargo space.

Wagons have traditionally been better equipped too, with more safety, luxury and convenience features, although the popularity of utes has seen many of these features now included in the load-luggers.

Wagons generally ride better than utes due to their different rear suspension design

Toyota's electronic traction control excels in the Prado Altitude

TWO OF THE BEST

With the aforementioned pros and cons in mind, and the availability of the new Everest Tremor, we thought it fitting to line this new model from Ford up with the 4x4 Of The Year winning Toyota Prado Altitude to see how they compare.

Manufacturers are cottoning on to the popularity of their wagons and the fact that owners like to use them for off-road adventuring, just what they were made for. Thus the Everest Tremor, like the Prado Altitude, has been specified for the adventurous driver, those who prefer their off road improvements to come from the factory rather than as aftermarket additions.

The Prado's 150kW/500Nm 2.8-litre engine provides plenty of poke

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The Tremor is configured to be the most off-road focused Everest

FORD PERFORMANCE

The Tremor is configured to be the most off-road focused Everest. It comes after the success of the Ranger Tremor launched last year but, where the Tremor ute was limited to the four-cylinder bi-turbo diesel powertrain, the wagon variant comes exclusively with the V6 diesel engine. And the Ranger Tremor was a limited-edition model whereas the Everest Tremor has been added to the model lineup on a permanent basis.

Like the Ranger Tremor, the Everest Tremor gets bespoke suspension to give it improved off-road capability. Ford Australia's engineering team tailored a set of Bilstein position-sensitive monotube gas-filled dampers with remote reservoirs to slot under the higher-riding Everest Tremor with a set of fresh coils that give it a 29mm lift.

A set of General Grabber all-terrain tyres in an LT265/70R17 fitment wrap around wider-than-standard alloy wheels to increase the wheel track a tad, while a steel underbody bash plate completes the hardware package. The underbody bash plate is actually part of the optional Rough Terrain Pack which, for an extra $3500, incorporates the bash plate, a Rough Terrain front bumper and an auxiliary switch panel on the dash.

The powertrain is the superb 'Lion' V6 3.0-litre diesel engine backed by a 10-speed automatic and dual range on-demand 4x4 system. It might be a bit thirsty when compared to its four-cylinder sibling, as well as its competitors, but none can match its sublime torque and smooth delivery all the way through the arc of the go-pedal. The auto transmission is beautifully matched to this engine and having the option of running the transfer case in the Auto setting on wet and/or loose roads is a huge plus in driveability and safety compared to part-time 4x4 systems.

As we found in the Ranger Tremor, the Bilstein-bolstered suspension does a superb job of controlling body movement in the Everest Tremor wagon. But this control does come at the expense of a firmer ride that can feel jarring on Victoria's crook

Ford's V6 diesel engine is unrivalled in its class when it comes to reminment

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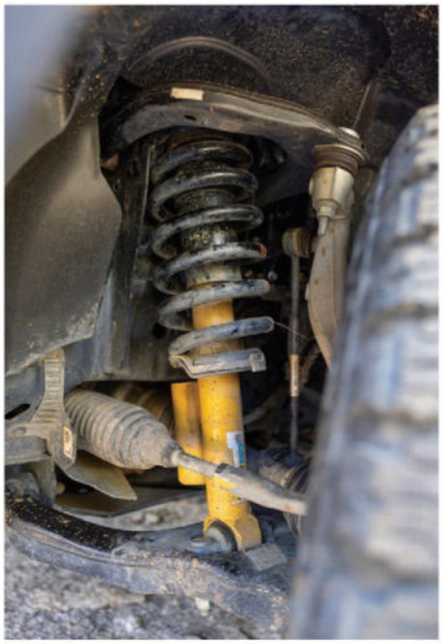


roads. This is no doubt amplified by the stiffer construction of the LT tyres fitted to the Tremor, but the ride quality is far from a deal breaker and the improved body control and handling poise outweigh any negativity.

As we've found in countless comparison tests in the past, Ford generally tunes its suspension and chassis packages to be firmer and more taught than Toyota's softer suspension calibration, giving the Everest more precise and confident handling when driving on road.

Toyota has taken a different path in equipping the Altitude's chassis for improved off-road performance. The suspension configuration remains the soft and supple all-coil arrangement with the standard shock absorbers, but a front swaybar disconnect function is added to increase the wheel travel on the front end by around 10 per cent. The sway bar automatically reconnects when road speeds reach 30km/h.

The soft, compliant multilink rear suspension of the Toyota gives the rear axle plenty of articulation which has always been a Toyota hallmark. The tauter Ford suspension picks up wheels sooner and relies more on its ETC and the RDL to get it through uneven terrain. With their traction aid systems employed, both of these wagons cruised across our deep opposing holes, while the Prado again demonstrated Toyota's leading electronic traction control calibration which almost negates the need for locking diffs in such terrain.

The Altitude is the only variant in the 250 Series Prado range that comes with a driver selectable rear diff lock (RDL), while all 4x4 Everests have one fitted as standard. Neither manufacturer offers a locking front diff on their wagons but they are available through the aftermarket.

While both of these off-road ready wagons ride on 18-inch wheels and tyres, the Ford's all-terrain rubber is ready for action while

Tremor's Bilstein dampers do a great job (above)

Toyota owners will be looking to replace the Toyo all-terrains on their Altitude as they are relatively mild as far as off-road rubber goes.

The Altitude gets a model specific grille with 'TOYOTA' spelt out across it, black wheel arch mouldings, and it is available in a range of grade-specific colours including a couple of heritage tones that can be paired with a white roof.

As we've found when driving other grades of Prado and Everest, both vehicles get the off-road job done but they do it in different ways, displaying their own specific characteristics.

The Ford's stiffer suspension is more sporty on formed roads, be they sealed or gravel, but in the rough stuff it lifts wheels sooner and its ETC is slower to react and kick in, meaning it relies on its RDL than the Prado does. The Everest is the one that would benefit most from the addition of a front locker and that's where the $15k in price saving compared to the Prado Altitude will come to the fore – that money will buy a lot of accessories to further equip your Tremor.

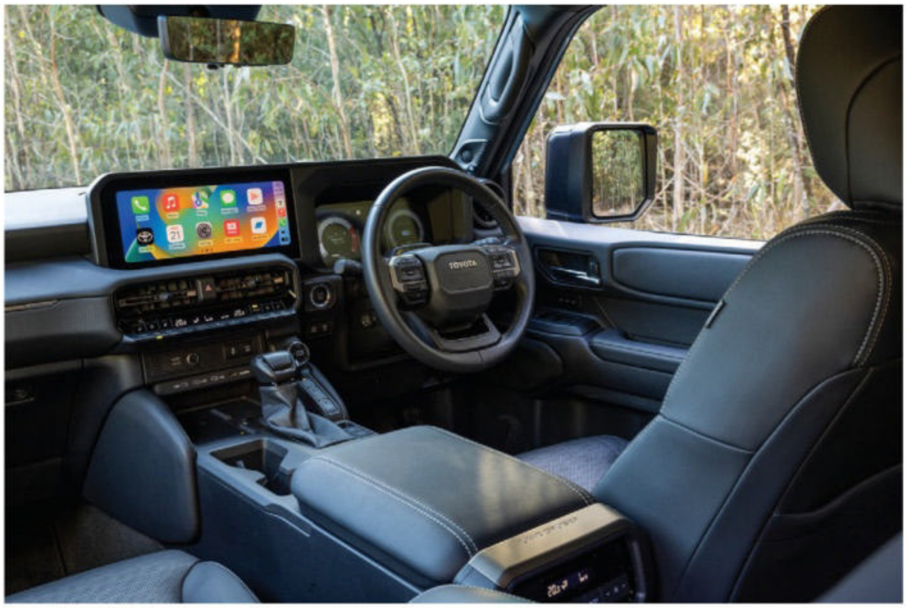
The Everest really benefits from the extra ground clearance and all terrain tyres included with the Tremor package, and this makes up for many of the things we criticised the Everest Sport for on our 4X4OTY test. The quicker-acting Rock Crawl drive mode also helps the Tremor's performance when driving off road .

The Toyota's more compliant longer-travel suspension isn't as rewarding or confident on the road but when the going gets rough it keeps the Prado Altitude's tyres on the ground where the excellent ETC can do its thing. If the terrain gets tougher, you can then resort to using the Altitude's RDL and swaybar disconnect, but they won't be needed for most of the off-road driving conditions owners are likely to subject their family 4x4 to.

TOYOTA
2BB·2MA

Prado Altitude gets 18-inch all terrain tyres but they have a relatvely mild tread pattern.

The Everest really benefits from the extra ground clearance and all terrain tyres included with the Tremor package



FULLY LOADED

As the higher specification models in their respective ranges, both the Altitude and the Tremor come very well equipped, indicative of their high price points.

Inside the Prado Altitude you'll find 12.3-inch multimedia screen that is compatible with wireless Apple CarPlay and Android Auto; Bluetooth connectivity; wireless charger, cloud-based inbuilt sat-nav; a panoramic moonroof; and leather-accented seat trim with eight-way power adjustment and power lumbar support and memory for the driver and four-way power adjustment for the passenger seat. There's also a 12.3-inch digital instrument cluster; a refrigerated centre console; power adjustable steering column; and a JBL sounds system kicking out the jams through 14 speakers.

For passengers in the front and second rows, the cabin is tall, spacious and comfortable with rear-seat ventilation and plenty of charging points including a 220V AC outlet.

Toyota dropped the ball when designing the rear of the 250 Series Prado and the seven-seat models are heavily compromised in the cargo area because of the 48-volt mild hybrid system. Thankfully the Altitude forgoes the third-row seat leaving the back for cargo storage. There is a small lip on the floor where the cover for the 48-volt battery and its processors sit underneath, but it's nothing like the compromises of the seven-seat models. The aftermarket is already producing rear drawers and storage systems for the 250 Series.

Across in the Ford there is no such compromise with seating and the Tremor retains its seven seats which don't infringe on cargo space as they fold flat into the floor when not in use. The cabin isn't as tall as that in the Prado and it feels smaller inside but unless you are unusually tall, it

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shouldn't be a problem. It's wide and is well equipped with leather-accented seats that have 'Tremor' insignias stitched into them.

The test vehicle featured the $1100 optional premium seat upgrade which adds heating, ventilation and power adjustment to the front seats. The vertical 12-inch multimedia screen is easy to read and use and retains manual controls for cabin temperature and volume control that you can easily use without taking your eyes off the road. Wireless mirroring for Apple and Android devices is standard and there's a wireless phone charger. An inverter and 220V AC outlet are also standard equipment for charging smaller devices.

As we mentioned when driving the Everest Sport recently, an annoying feature compared to some of the other 4x4 vehicles in the Ford range is having to select the off-road screen to activate the RDL – other Ford models have it at the touch of a button.

The Tremor adds a Rock Crawl mode to the drive modes which sharpens up the centre diff clutch pack and ETC for quicker reaction when traction is lost off road, and we found it to be beneficial on this test.

Another option fitted to this particular Tremor is the Touring Pack which, for another $2500, includes a 360° camera system; integrated trailer brake controller; tow bar and hitch; and the Pro Trailer back-up system.

Externally the Tremor gets a bespoke grille with driving lights tucked in behind it and black wheel-arch flares. The Tremor is only available in four different shades of grey and no colours.

Add in $700 for prestige paint and that's $7800 worth of optional extras on this vehicle, eating into that $15k price advantage over the Altitude.

The Prado's 150kW/500Nm 2.8-litre engine provides plenty of poke for highway and off-road driving but it's no performance vehicle by any stretch of the imagination. The new eight-speed automatic transmission is quick to kick down and respond to a floored throttle and the engine pulls adequately with that familiar four-pot diesel rumble. While it's less refined and 100Nm down on Ford's V6 engine, Toyota's 2.8 does a respectable job and isn't left wanting. As to whether it's up to being in a well-appointed wagon that's nudging the $100k mark, we're not convinced. The 250 Series deserves better.

Ford's 184kW/600Nm Lion V6 has been undergoing a series of rolling updates to its aging base and we feel it is an engine far better suited to these high-spec wagons, even if it is fitted to the cheaper of the two wagons here. It might like a drink, but the way it delivers its molasses-smooth torque is more befitting of a premium off-road rig than Toyota's four is.

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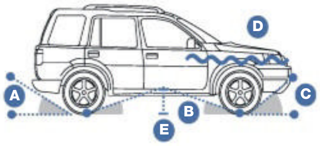
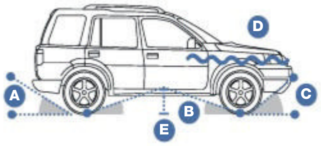
TOYOTA PRADO ALTITUDE

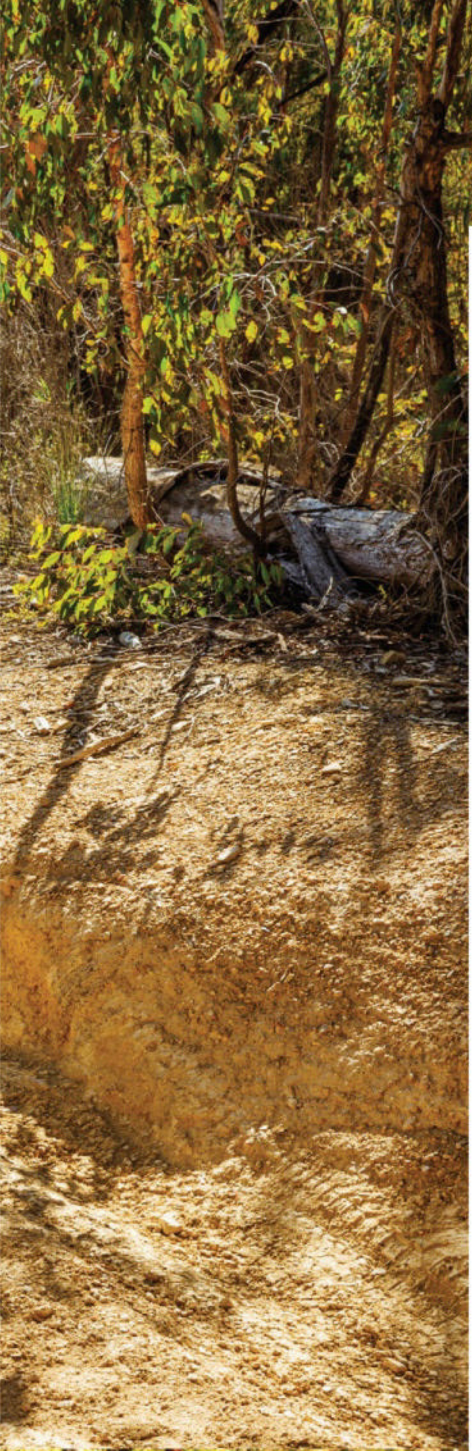
A	DEPARTURE ANGLE	17°
B	RAMPOVER ANGLE	25°
C	APPROACH ANGLE	32°
D	WADING DEPTH	700mm
E	GROUND CLEARANCE	221mm



FORD EVEREST TREMOR

A	DEPARTURE ANGLE	17°
B	RAMPOVER ANGLE	26.8°
C	APPROACH ANGLE	32°
D	WADING DEPTH	800mm
E	GROUND CLEARANCE	255mm





WHICH WAGON?

Choosing the right off-road wagon from this pair will come down to a few key differences in how the relative manufacturers offer them and how each fits in with your budget and intended use.

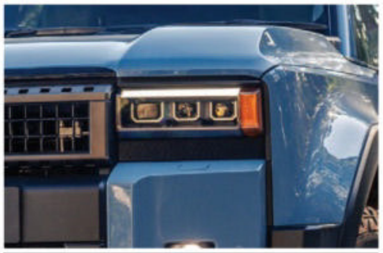
The big one is the circa-$15k price difference between the two, as it could be a deal breaker for potential Pardo buyers. As mentioned, the money saved by choosing the Tremor could equip your wagon with a lot of accessories and/or pay for an extended outback family holiday.

Another positive for the Ford in the eyes of some is that it retains its seven seats, and when folded away and the vehicle is used as a five-seater, those seats don't eat into the cargo space.

Then there's that syrupy V6 diesel engine that is unrivalled in this sub-$100k class of 4x4…

In the Altitude's favour are its strong off-road performance, larger cabin, more economical engine and bigger fuel tank. But are these features worth that extra money?

Whichever of these two vehicles you choose, you'll end up with a wagon that's up to the challenges of adventurous Aussie four-wheel drivers.



	TOYOTA PRADO ALTITUDE	FORD EVEREST TREMOR
PRICE	$92,700 +ORC	$76,590 +ORC
ENGINE	4-cyl turbo diesel	V6 diesel
CAPACITY	2755cc	2993cc
MAX POWER	150kW@ 3000-3400rpm	184kW @ 3750rpm
MAX TORQUE	500NM@ 1600-2800rpm	600Nm @ 1750-2250rpm
TRANSMISSION	8-speed automatic	10-speed automatic
4X4 SYSTEM	Full-time, dual range. Lockable centre & rear diffs	2wd, 4x4 auto, 4x4 high range, 4x4 low range, RDL
CONSTRUCTION	5-door wagon on a ladder frame chassis	5-door wagon on a ladder frame chassis
FRONT SUSPENSION	IFS with double wishbones and coil springs	IFS with double wishbones and coil springs
REAR SUSPENSION	Live axle, coil springs, multi-links, Panhard rod	Live axle, coil springs, multi-links, Watts linkage
TYRES	265/65R18 on alloys	LT265/70R17 on alloys
KERB WEIGHT	2595kg	2550kg
GVM	3200kg	3240kg
GCM	6600kg	6350kg
TOWING CAPACITY	3500kg	3500kg
PAYLOAD	605kg	690kg
SEATS	5	7
FUEL TANK	110L – 17.4L Adblue	80L -17L Adblue
ADR FUEL CONSUMPTION	7.6L/100km	8.5L/100km
TEST FUEL CONSUMPTION	N/a	N/a

DMI·376

PLUG-IN POWER

GWM ADDS TO ITS CANNON ALPHA RANGE OF UTES BY INTRODUCING A PHEV VARIANT AND IT'S A BEAUTY!

WORDS MATT RAUDONIKIS **PHOTOS** ELLEN DEWAR

Great Wall Motors (GWM) has joined BYD by launching a plug-in hybrid 4x4 ute to the Australian market and, unlike the Shark, . Unlike the BYD Shark, the Cannon Alpha PHEV is a proper 4x4 with genuine off-road capability. Ford has just launched its Ranger PHEV which we were yet to drive at the time of writing

GWM has created its PHEV on the existing platform of the Cannon Alpha which is a slightly larger and better-equipped version of the Cannon ute. The Alpha is 5445mm long (35mm longer than Cannon Ute), 1991mm wide (57mm wider than Cannon Ute) and 1924mm high (38mm taller than Cannon Ute). The wheelbase of 3350mm is longer than that of a Cannon Ute by 120mm.

GWM released Australia's first hybrid EV 4x4 ute in Australia in the middle of 2024 and this updated model is a plug-in version of that vehicle. GWM still offers the hybrid model as well as diesel-fuelled variants and now the PHEV. Two specification grades are offered – Lux and Ultra – and we have the Ultra PHEV on test here.

The big difference between the GWM and BYD utes is that the Cannon Alpha has a more conventional drivetrain with a nine-speed automatic transmission, dual-range transfer case and a tailshaft leading back to a live rear axle. In the case of the BYD Shark the only connection between the front and rear axles is electronic – there is no mechanical connection – which limits its off-road ability.

The Cannon Ultra PHEV driveline

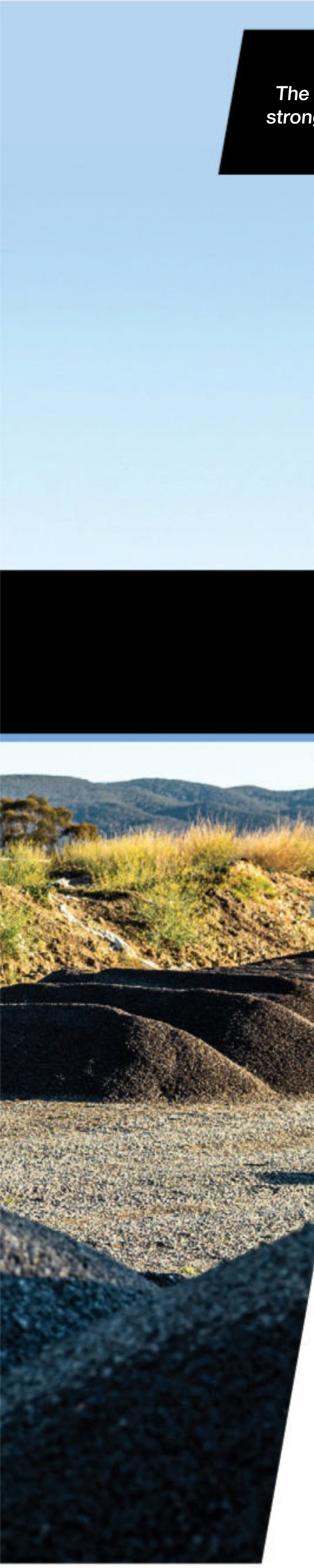
comprises a turbocharged 2.0-litre petrol engine and a single electric motor that is located within the transmission bell-housing along with the torque converter. Combined they deliver an output of 300kW and 750Nm and this is fed to a dual-range, on-demand 4x4 system.

The ICE engine makes 180kW and 380Nm on its own but when combined with the electric motor produces outputs exceeding that of most conventional ICE powered 4x4 utes. On and off road, the combined output gives the GWM impressive acceleration despite its 2800kg weight. Torque is king and the Cannon launches like it was shot out of a… umm, cannon. It even has a launch mode for quick getaways after you've waded through the menus to find and engage it.

GWM claims that the Cannon Ultra has an EV range of 115km and a combined ICE and EV touring range of 1060km utilising the 75-litre petrol tank. The system has multiple modes to prioritise drive to your conditions with EV priority, full EV and intelligent modes. Charging times from a DC charger are claimed to be 24 minutes from 30-80 per cent charge. There's comprehensive info on the multimedia screen on the charging status and time, and you can also check it remotely via the GWM app. Filling the fuel tank with petrol is always simple and quick.

COMBINED THEY DELIVER AN OUTPUT OF 300KW AND 750NM AND THIS IS FED TO A DUAL-RANGE, ON-DEMAND 4X4 SYSTEM

BOLD The Alpha makes a strong statement up front



BRIGHT The silver finish on some controls looks dated and can be hard to read in some light.

ON THE ROAD

As mentioned, the Cannon's acceleration is brisk but you do feel its heft. Once up to speed it cruises smoothly and quietly whether in EV mode or when the ICE unit is in operation. An annoyance I found was the way the vehicle decelerates so much whenever you lift off the accelerator. This is because of the regenerative charging action of the hybrid powertrain , but if I wanted the Cannon to slow so much I'd use the brakes and not have the system doing it for me.

A further annoyance is the driver monitor that constantly harangues you. You can disable it, but again you have to go through the screen menus every time you start the vehicle to shut it up.

On gravel surfaces the Ultra rides nicely over small corrugations and ruts inspiring confidence in the chassis and handling. It's firm while still compliant enough to provide a comfortable ride.

Off road and in low range the ute makes easy work of uneven terrain and lifting wheels are countered by fast-acting ETC without having to engage the Ultra's front and rear locking diffs. That's right – the Cannon Alpha has front and rear lockers standard from the factory, something you can only find in a Ranger Raptor elsewhere in the midsize ute class. The ETC is a bit noisy in its operation and not as smooth as the best systems out there but it gets the job done.

The wishbone front end has the usual IFS limitations causing the aforementioned wheel lift while the leaf-spring live-axle rear articulates okay, if not amazingly. Combined with the front and rear lockers, the overall off-road package of the Cannon Alpha is pretty impressive.

INSIDE STOY

Also impressive is the array of standard equipment inside this ute. The 14.6-inch infotainment screen takes pride of place in the centre of the dash and is both big and easy to see and use. It is home to all the usual system settings, controls, Apple Carplay and Android Auto mirroring functions. Unfortunately the only volume adjustment is via a slow-acting toggle on the steering wheel and the cabin temperature adjustment is all within the screen. This is annoying and somewhat dangerous as, if you like me, you drive with Carplay on most of the time, to adjust the cabin temperature you need to go into another menu, find the appropriate control and make the adjustment. When doing this the driver monitoring system will tell you to pay attention to driving and drive carefully, which is super annoying.

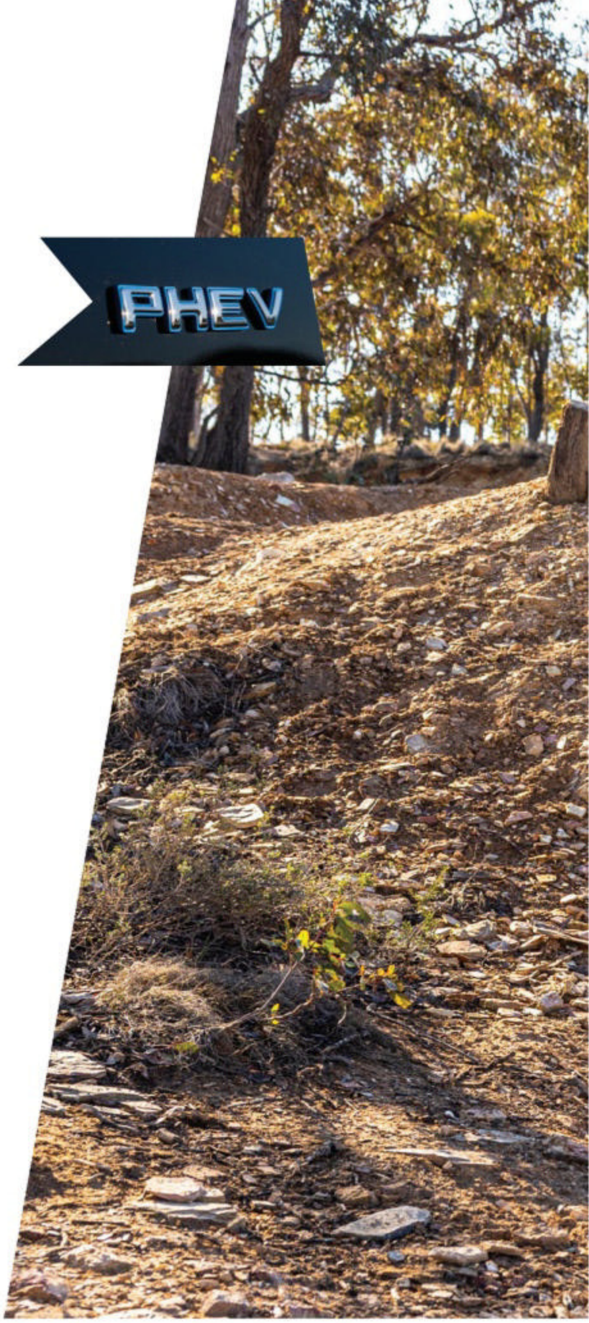
The leather-covered seats are ventilated, heated front and rear with massaging on the front pews. The rear seats also have an electric slide and recline function that reduces the angle of the upright backrest that is customary in double-cab utes however, if a tall driver has his/her seat all the way back, it doesn't leave a lot of space for the seat behind to slide forward and recline. But even in a normal, upright position there's plenty of leg and headroom in the back for most passengers.

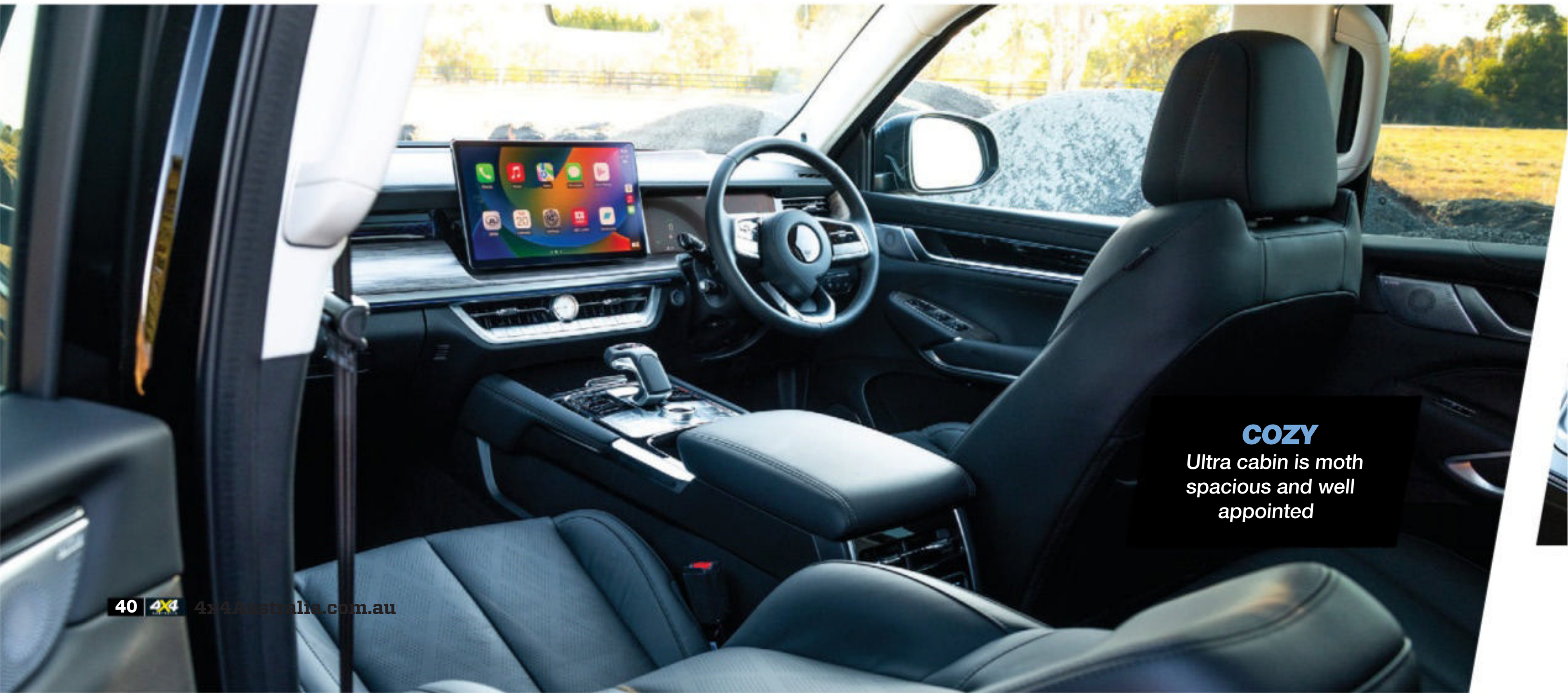
Like the locking diffs, the level of features in the Ultra is a rare find in the midsize ute segment and one that is appreciated. Also appreciated is the large cargo tub that has a unique tailgate setup that can be opened in the traditional drop-down manner or swing-out via a vertical split. The tub offers 1100mm between the wheel arches but in the PHEV, the spare wheel is mounted in the tub as the EV battery pack takes up the space below the tub where the spare would normally reside. There's also a power outlet in the back to run power tools and accessories off the Cannon's battery. On our drive, the vinyl cover over the spare tyre kept blowing off so we ended up removing it all together.

The Cannon Alpha has all the standard ADAS and safety features needed to give it a 2025 five-star ANCAP rating. It's just a shame that the driver monitor system is so intrusive and annoying.

Important for many users is towing capacity and the Cannon PHEV retains the non-EV model's 3500kg maximum braked towing capacity. Not so good is the 685kg payload which means that owners will have to be cautious with how much they load into their Cannon, especially if they have anywhere near the maximum 350kg on the towbar.

The GWM comes with a seven-year factory warranty, seven-year roadside assistance and capped-price servicing, and an eight-year warranty on the lithium EV battery pack.





COZY
Ultra cabin is moth spacious and well appointed

NOT SO GOOD IS THE 685KG PAYLOAD WHICH MEANS THAT OWNERS WILL HAVE TO BE CAUTIOUS

R
N
D/M
P
4L
MODE
8:55

READY
0
km/h
100
After Resetting
6h 47min
Driving time
11.0 L/100km
Average Fuel
5.7 kWh/100km
Avg Energy Cons
653km
HEV
NORMAL

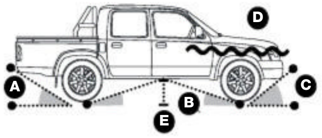
RANGE
The driver has readouts for both petrol nd EV range

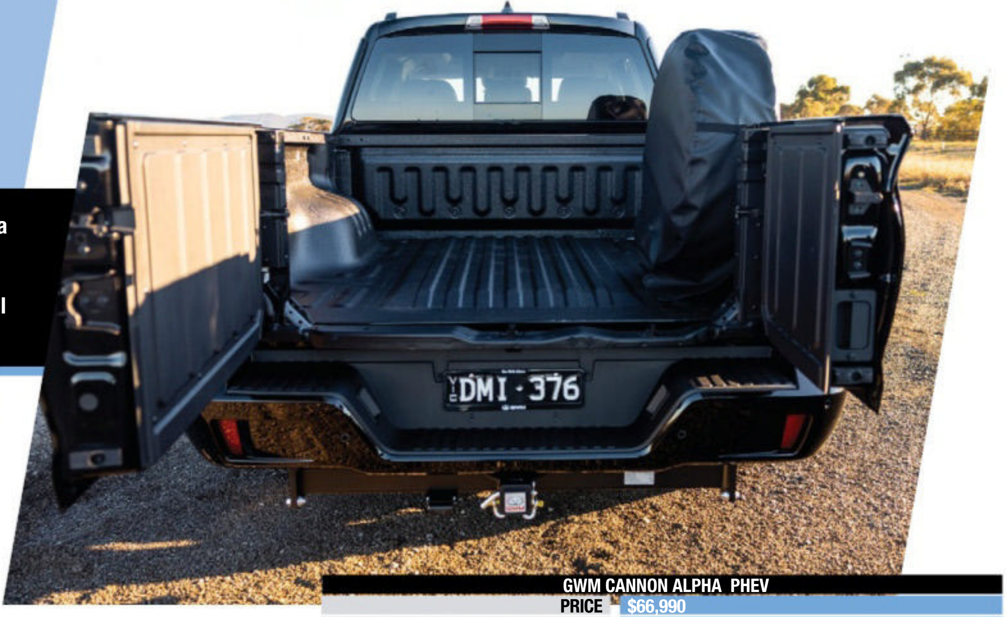
SUMMARY

The GWM Cannon Alpha PHEV gives buyers wanting an electrified ute an option that delivers hybrid fuel efficiency with genuine off-road and towing capability in a luxurious and spacious vehicle for a very attractive price and ownership package. It's a package that hasn't been available in Australia until now, and until we spend some time in the Ranger PHEV, it offers the best all-round combination of all the key elements; this is especially so in the top-spec Ultra trim with the $67k price. For reference, the Ford Ranger PHEV will start at $72k and go up to $87k for the top-spec model.

GWM CANNON ALPHA PHEV

A DEPARTURE ANGLE	23°
B RAMPOVER ANGLE	19°
C APPROACH ANGLE	28.5°
D WADING DEPTH	800mm
E GROUND CLEARANCE	210mm





The unique tailgate has a vertcle split for swing-out opening or can be opened in the traditional drop-down way.

GWM CANNON ALPHA PHEV	
PRICE	$66,990
ENGINE	Petrol ICE with Electric motor
CAPACITY	2.0L
MAX POWER	300kw (combined)
MAX TORQUE	750Nm (combined.
TRANSMISSION	9-speed automatic
4X4 SYSTEM	On demand/dual range
CONSTRUCTION	4-door ute on ladder frame chassis
FRONT SUSPENSION	Dbl wishbone, coil IFS
REAR SUSPENSION	Live axle with leafs
TYRES	265/60-R18 on alloy wheels
WEIGHT	2810kg (kerb)
GVM	3495kg
GCM	6745kg
TOWING CAPACITY	3500kg braked
PAYLOAD	685kg
SEATS	5
FUEL TANK	75L
ADR FUEL CONSUMPTION	1.7L/100km Combined hybrid
ON TEST FUEL CONSUMPTION	N/a

OFFROAD

GWM suspension gives a good mix of on and off road performance

CHARGED RANGER

WORDS DEAN MELLOR PHOTOS NATHAN JACOBS/FORD AUSTRALIA

FORD'S NEW RANGER PHEV BLENDS PETROL POWER WITH ELECTRIC TORQUE, DELIVERING STRONG PERFORMANCE, REFINED ROAD MANNERS AND GENUINE 4X4 CAPABILITY – ALL WHILE SLASHING FUEL USE AND OFFERING PLUG-IN PRACTICALITY.

Ford has added a plug-in hybrid to its top-selling ute range, and the Ranger PHEV is more than just a fuel-saver – it's a refined, powerful and highly capable dual-cab ute that is effective for work, touring and off-road conditions.

At the heart of the new model is a 2.3-litre turbocharged four-cylinder petrol engine paired with a 75kW electric motor and an 11.8kWh battery. On its own, the 2.3-litre petrol engine makes a claimed 138kW at 4600rpm and 411Nm at 2700rpm, but combined output is a stout 207kW at 4600rpm and 697Nm at 2500rpm, fed through a 10-speed Modular Hybrid Transmission (MHT) and a full-time 4x4 system lifted from the Ranger Raptor. This includes a locking rear diff, low-range and an Auto 4WD setting that works well on mixed terrain.

Ford claims 2.9L/100km combined fuel consumption under lab testing, and a battery-only range of 45km (WLTP), but on our real-world drive – starting in Auto EV mode – we covered around 27km on battery alone before the battery was depleted and the petrol engine took over. Over a 60km mixed loop, our average fuel

ALL ROADS
PHEV loses none of its all road ability but it i's heavier than a diesel model

consumption was 6.9L/100km, which is still impressive for what is a fairly large dual-cab ute with serious off-road chops. A regenerative braking system helps charge the battery which aids efficiency in stop-start driving scenarios; there is an EV Coach in the instrument cluster aimed at helping drivers make the most of the system.

The addition of the battery and electric motor system means the Ranger PHEV is significantly heavier than its diesel siblings, with kerb weights ranging from 2527kg in the XLT to 2692kg in the fully optioned Stormtrak – around 240-400kg heavier than an equivalent 3.0L V6 diesel model. That extra weight eats into payload, with figures dropping as low as 808kg in the Stormtrak. It should also be noted that the quoted payload figures are without the spare wheel/tyre hanging under the tub, as this vital component is now offered as a no-cost option; we can't help but think the reason for this is down to marketing as the deletion of the spare as standard equipment means around 20kg can be added to the payload figure across the range. While still capable of towing a 3500kg braked trailer, prospective owners will need to pay close attention to gross vehicle mass (GVM) and payload calculations if loading the tub or hitching up a heavy trailer.

The Ranger PHEV is available in four trim levels – XLT, Sport, Wildtrak and Stormtrak – with drive-away pricing ranging from $71,990 to $86,990. The XLT offers the essentials, including full-time 4x4, selectable EV drive modes, and Pro Power Onboard with up to 6.9kW of AC output. Stepping up to the Sport ($75,990 drive-away) adds leather-accented trim, heated seats, wireless charging and LED lighting. The $79,990 Wildtrak introduces matrix LED headlights, power roller shutter, unique styling and a 10-speaker B&O sound system. At the top of the range, the Stormtrak ($86,990 drive-away) includes exclusive Chill Grey accents, a flexible rack system, unique 18-inch wheels, and factory-fitted auxiliary switches for powering aftermarket gear.

LIGHT UP
Powering up your campsite using power from the PHEV battery

POWER PACK

Charging the Ranger PHEV is as easy as plugging in your smartphone. The vehicle is supplied with a Mode 2 home charging cable and can be topped up overnight using a standard 240V wall socket. From empty to full, the 11.8kWh battery takes just under seven hours to charge on a 10A outlet, or around four hours on a 15A socket – ideal for those wanting to start the next day's commute with a full charge and minimal fuel use.

The Ranger PHEV does not offer DC fast-charging, but if you're away from a power source or just want to replenish the battery on the move, selecting EV Charge mode turns the petrol engine into a generator. This is ideal when you want to use the Ranger's Pro Power Onboard system to run 240V appliances at a worksite or campsite – things like power tools, a bar fridge, a coffee machine or even a Travel Buddy oven. It also ensures you've got enough stored energy to charge up an electric bike or other kit when you arrive at your destination.

There are three AC power outlets; two 3.45kW (15A @ 230V) outlets in the tray and a 2.3kW (10A @ 230V) outlet in the cabin. Once the 11.8kWh battery is depleted, it can be recharged by simply firing up the engine and selecting EV Charge mode; Ford describes it as a portable generator with a 70-litre fuel tank.

Theoretically, if you were staying at the one campsite for an extended period, you could also charge the battery from solar panels, but you would need to use an inverter and charge through the standard AC input using the supplied Mode 2 home charging cable.

CHARGING
Power goes in (above) power goes out (below)

ON THE ROAD

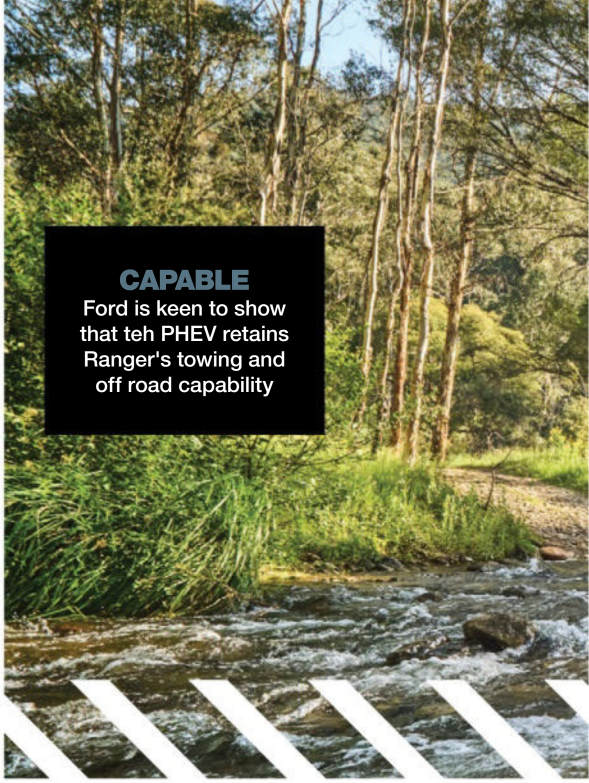
On bitumen, the Ranger PHEV feels more refined than its diesel siblings. The petrol-electric drivetrain is smooth and quiet, with acceleration that easily rivals the V6 diesel. Put your foot down and this Ranger hauls. The electric motor fills in any gaps from the turbo-petrol engine and the result is strong, seamless torque delivery.

Even towing a 2.8-tonne trailer and digger combo, the PHEV felt untroubled. While we didn't record fuel figures during towing, it's clear the hybrid system helps with low-speed grunt, making for effortless take-offs and confident hill starts. There's also a Pro Trailer Back-up Assist system on Wildtrak and Stormtrak model grades, with a dial in the centre console to aid reversing with a trailer attached.

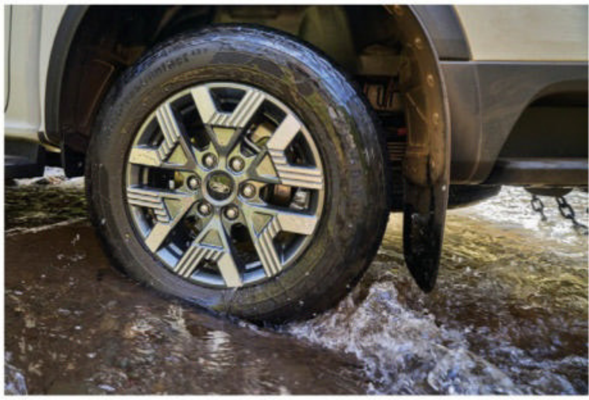
Handling is well sorted too. Steering is nicely weighted, body control is tight, and unladen ride quality is good. The Ranger PHEV is heftier than its diesel counterparts and much of this weight (the battery) is towards the rear of the vehicle, and this no doubt helps to settle the rear end when driving over bumpy roads. Lane-keep assist works unobtrusively and, unlike some rivals, there's no incessant beeping.

The hybrid system offers four drive modes: Auto EV, EV Now, EV Later and EV Charge. In EV Charge mode – which uses the engine to replenish the battery – we recorded 9.6L/100km on a highway leg, and it would take around two hours of driving to fully charge from empty. This was on a vehicle equipped with optional General Grabber A/T rubber (255/65R18), so you could eke out a bit more fuel economy if you were on the standard Continental ContiCrossContact H/T tyres. Regardless, with a 70-litre tank, the theoretical touring range on the open road is more than 700km.

Speaking of the open road, Ford Australia was at pains to point out that it has the second-largest dealer network in the country; a subtle dig, no doubt, at the new Chinese players on the market that are eating into the market share of traditional nameplates.

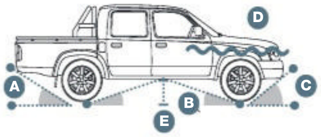


CAPABLE
Ford is keen to show that teh PHEV retains Ranger's towing and off road capability



FORD RANGER PHEV

A	DEPARTURE ANGLE	23.9°-24.7°
B	RAMPOVER ANGLE	19.6°-20.4°
C	APPROACH ANGLE	28.9°-30.2°
D	WADING DEPTH	800mm
E	GROUND CLEARANCE	215-228mm



OFF THE ROAD

We tackled a few off-road challenges on the launch drive, including a short run on a tricky track in Lerderderg State Park on Day 1 and several off-road courses at the Australian Automotive Research Centre (AARC), a facility that 4X4 Australia has used previously for 4X4 Of The Year testing.

Like other Rangers, the PHEV variants feature driver-selectable modes (Normal, Eco, Tow/Haul, Slippery, Mud/Ruts, Sand and Sport) in addition to its EV Drive modes. The track in Lerderderg was steep and slippery in places and was good for testing the effectiveness of the Ranger PHEV's drive modes, low-range gearing, rear diff lock, traction control, ground clearance and off-road angles. If you are familiar with the performance of a diesel Ranger off road, this will give you a fair idea of how the Ranger PHEV performs, which is to say it's an impressive bit of kit.

On the test loop at the Australian Automotive Research Centre, the Ranger PHEV clambered up 60 per cent grades in 4 Auto mode using EV power only. The petrol engine only joined in when needed, doing so quietly and smoothly. In really tricky situations you would obviously select low range and lock the rear diff, in which case the petrol engine would automatically fire up.

Hill Descent Control is excellent. Speed is adjustable in 1km/h increments via the cruise control buttons, and the system works quietly, without the whirring of older-generation systems. Forward camera vision is great for cresting hills, and Ford has thoughtfully added a washer jet to keep it clean.

Like other Rangers, wading depth is quoted at 800mm. It should be noted that the engine air intake is forward facing just below the lip of the bonnet, so fitment of a snorkel would be a good idea for 4x4 touring.

There's a unique joy to off-roading in near silence. With the windows down and the electric motor engaged, you hear only tyres on gravel and the sounds of birds and bush. It's an entirely entertaining way to experience a track, and even when the electric engine kicks in, the Ranger PHEV is still quieter than the diesel variants, and it's this refinement that many buyers will find attractive.

THE ELECTRIC MOTOR FILLS IN ANY GAPS FROM THE TURBO-PETROL ENGINE AND THE RESULT IS STRONG, SEAMLESS TORQUE DELIVERY

2H
4H
4L
4A
DRIVE MODES

MODES
PHEV retains Ranger's dual-range on-demand 4x4 system

MODEL RANGE BASICS

XLT – $71,990 DRIVE-AWAY

- Full-time 4WD with EV drive modes
- 17-inch alloys, halogen lighting
- Cloth trim, manual seats
- Pro Power Onboard (6.9kW max)
- Rear diff lock, adaptive cruise

SPORT – $75,990 DRIVE-AWAY (IN ADDITION TO XLT)

- 18-inch alloys, LED lighting
- Leather-accented trim (heated fronts)
- Power driver's seat, wireless charging
- Dark exterior accents
- Enhanced driver assist with Stop & Go

WILDTRAK – $79,990 DRIVE-AWAY (IN ADDITION TO SPORT)

- Matrix LED headlights
- Power roller shutter, roof rails
- Unique grille and sailplane
- B&O 10-speaker premium audio
- 360-degree camera, Pro Trailer Backup Assist

STORMTRAK – $86,990 DRIVE-AWAY (IN ADDITION TO WILDTRAK)

- Chill Grey accents, exclusive wheels
- Flexible rack system and cargo management
- Aux switch bank (standard)
- Unique leather seats with Stormtrak trim

INSIDE, UNDERSIDE AND OUTBACK

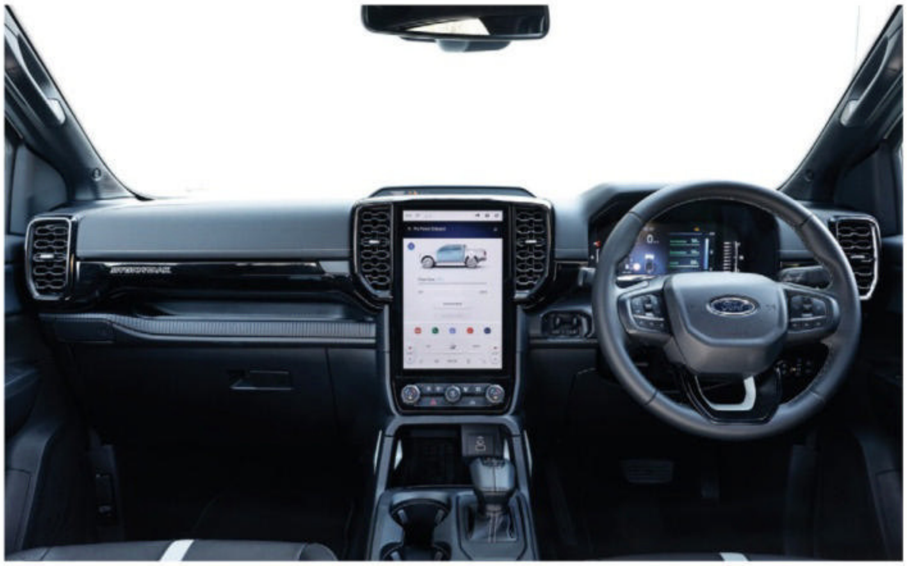
Step inside and the Ranger PHEV feels familiar. The interior mirrors that of the diesel Ranger, which means good ergonomics, supportive seats and a massive 12-inch portrait centre screen that thankfully retains physical dials for volume and climate control, making on-the-fly adjustments easier than systems buried entirely in menus.

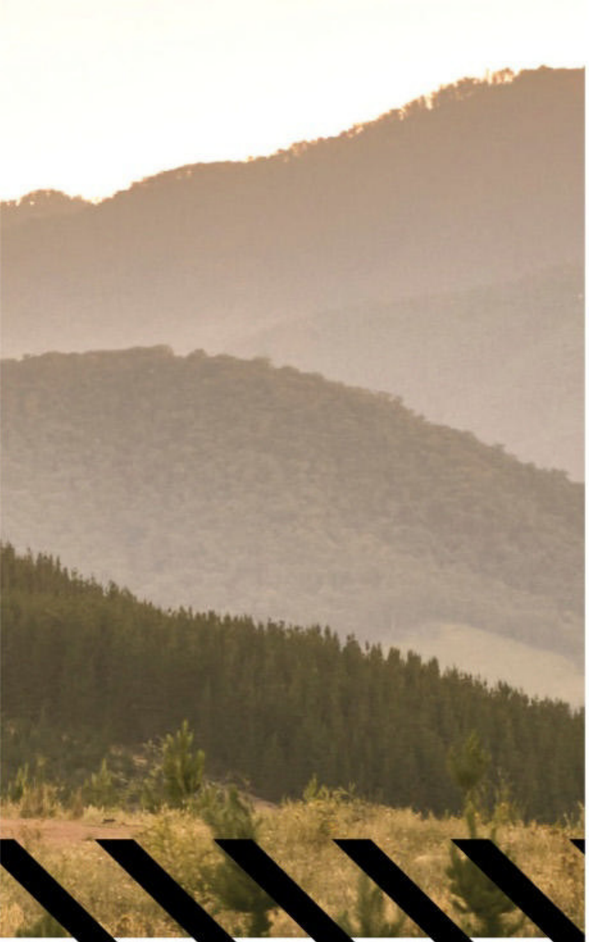
New features include a dash-mounted button to open the fuel filler (necessary for the pressurised fuel system) and a charging port with a locking function on the passenger side.

Out the back you can't remove the tub to fit a tray or canopy – the location of the battery, the integrated wiring and the 240V outlets rule that out – but the tub is otherwise well set up.

There are cut-outs in the tub liner to accommodate long items, while a pair of adjustable top-rail tie-downs and a 31mm raised bed floor (to accommodate the battery) distinguish it from other Ranger tubs.

Underbody protection has been fitted to prevent damage to the battery pack when driving off road, but take a peek beneath the passenger-side sill and you'll spot an orange electrical conduit mounted on the outside of the chassis rail, and while it doesn't hang low, it looks like it could be vulnerable to debris strikes – a guard here would be welcome.





WITH THE WINDOWS DOWN AND THE ELECTRIC MOTOR ENGAGED, YOU HEAR ONLY TYRES ON GRAVEL AND THE SOUNDS OF BIRDS AND BUSH

FORD RANGER PHEV	
PRICE	$71,990 (XLT); $75,990 (Sport); $79,990 (Wildtrak); $86,990 (Stormtrak)
ENGINE	2.3L turbo petrol four with 75kW e-motor
CAPACITY	2.3L petrol + 11.8kWh battery
MAX POWER	207kW (combined)
MAX TORQUE	697Nm (combined)
TRANSMISSION	10-speed automatic
4X4 SYSTEM	Selectable full-time 4WD, dual-range
CONSTRUCTION	4-door ute on ladder frame chassis
FRONT SUSPENSION	IFS, double wishbones, coil springs
REAR SUSPENSION	Live axle with leaf springs
TYRES	17-18in (A/T optional)
KERB WEIGHT	2527-2692kg
GVM	3500kg
GCM	6580kg
TOWING CAPACITY	3500kg
PAYLOAD	808-973kg (no spare fitted)
SEATS	5
FUEL TANK	70L
ADR FUEL CONSUMPTION	2.9L/100km (claimed)
ON TEST FUEL CONSUMPTION	8.3L/100km (Auto EV/EV Charge modes predominantly highway driving)

SUMMARY

Ford's first plug-in hybrid 4x4 ute is more than a stepping stone toward electrification – it's a genuine dual-cab workhorse with real-world benefits. Sure, it runs a much smaller-capacity battery than its obvious rivals, but the Ranger PHEV hauls, tows and climbs with ease. It brings strong performance, low fuel use and added refinement over diesel models, while keeping all the off-road gear intact.

While it doesn't have quite the same electric-only range as some competitors, it makes up for it with a proper mechanical 4x4 system, full towing capacity (3500kg) and a well-integrated hybrid driveline. The onboard Pro Power system adds serious appeal for campers and tradies needing AC power on the worksite or at the campsite.

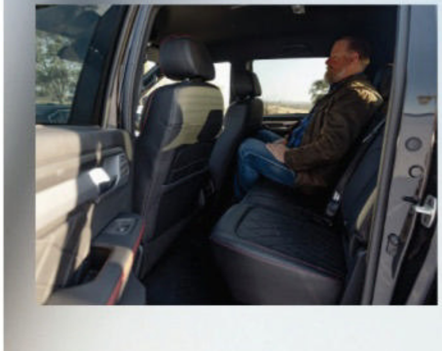
Until full electric utes catch up on range, and a comprehensive nation-wide charging infrastructure is in place, the PHEV powertrain looks to be the sweet spot – and Ford's execution of it in the Ranger is very well resolved. Of course, the Ranger PHEV will not be for everyone, particularly those who want to fit a tray or canopy, but despite not having the electric range of some of its competitors, including the new GWM Canon Alpha also tested in this issue, there's no doubt Ford has done its homework and has developed a compelling hybrid ute for those looking at an alternative to diesel ute offerings.

HAVEN & HELL

WORDS MATT RAUDONIKIS PHOTOS ELLEN DEWAR

THE JAC T9 IS THE MOST AFFORDABLE NEW UTE ON THE MARKET AND AFTER TESTING IT WE CAN CLEARLY SEE WHY

The suspension is stiff with very little travel or compliance.

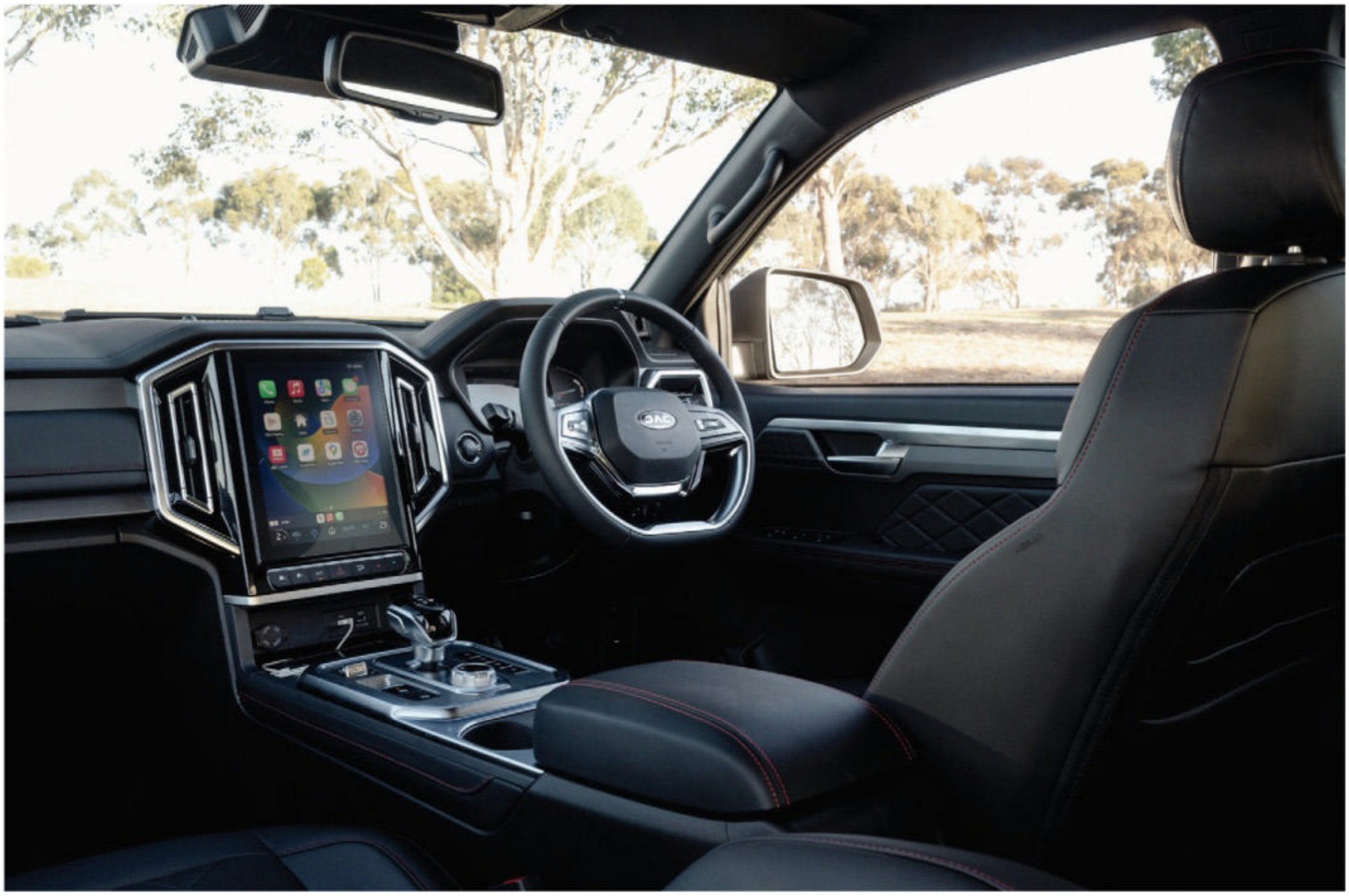


The JAC T9 is a 4x4 double-cab, body-on-frame ute that comes from Jianghuai Automobile Corporation (JAC).It follows the traditional path of 4x4 utes with a diesel engine, automatic transmission and dual-range part time 4x4.

Starting at $42,662 (+ORC) for the T9 Oasis and stepping up to the $45,630 (+ORC) for the T9 Haven that we have on test here, it represents a step back in time for 4x4 utes, a time of simpler and more working-class utes than the over complicated and expensive offerings elsewhere in the market today.

The Haven is the top-of-the-range T9 ute and as such comes heavily loaded with features including a 10.4-inch touchscreen infotainment system with phone mirroring by cable only, quilted leather-accented power adjustable and heated front seats, 360° camera,

POWER TO HAUL COMES FROM A 2.0-LITRE TURBO-DIESEL ENGINE THAT MAKES JUST 120KW OF POWER AND 410NM OF TORQUE



No tricks in this tray, just a working class load space

adaptive cruise control and multiple drive modes.

The cabin is comparable in size to a previous generation Mitsubishi Triton, so not as big as a Ranger or Amarok but big enough for kids in the back.

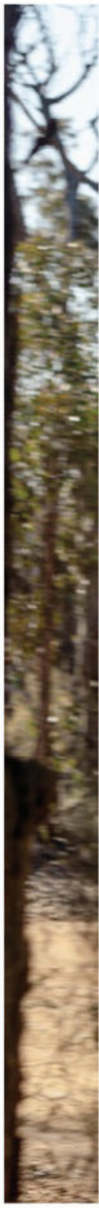
JAC claims you can fit a pallet in the cargo tub while the payload is 1045kg. The GVM is 3100kg and maximum braked towing is 3200kg. The cargo tub has a spray-on bed liner but no power outlets and the four tie-downs are mounted higher than the ideal position, but at least they are in each corner. The sports bar adds nothing.

Power to haul comes from a 2.0-litre turbo-diesel engine that makes just 120kW of power and 410Nm of torque, and it's backed by an eight-speed automatic transmission and the aforementioned part-time 4x4 system. A driver selectable rear diff lock helps the ETC when the going gets rough.

Safety-wise, the T9 has ticked all the boxes to earn a five-star ANCAP rating and that's using the 2024 testing regime, meaning tougher testing standards. All the latest safety and electronic aids are part of the JAC package. A 220V power outlet adds to the regular USB outlets for cabin power.

On the road, the T9 feels like an older ute in the way it rides over rough sealed roads. It's stiff and non-compliant meaning that it jostles the driver and passengers around a fair bit. The first part of our drive in the T9 was up a Melbourne freeway which is in pretty poor condition and after an hour behind the wheel I felt like I'd done a day of off-roading. The constant jostling and steering inputs make driving the T9 tiring. This isn't helped by the lack of reach adjustment for the steering wheel, meaning I need to stretch out to hold the steering wheel which made the driving position uncomfortable for me. The steering column has height adjustment but that doesn't really help taller drivers find a comfortable position.

The double wishbone, coil spring front suspension and leaf supported live-axle rear give the T9 a firm feeling



	JAC T9 HAVEN
PRICE	$45,630 (+ORC)
ENGINE	4-cyl turbo diesel
CAPACITY	2.0L
MAX POWER	120kW @ 3600rpm
MAX TORQUE	410Nm @ 1500-2500rpm
TRANSMISSION	8-speed automatic
4X4 SYSTEM	Part-time/dual range
CRAWL RATIO	N/a
CONSTRUCTION	4-door ute on ladder frame
FRONT SUSPENSION	IFS, double wishbones, coil springs
REAR SUSPENSION	Live axle, leaf springs
TYRES	265/60R18 on alloy wheels
KERB WEIGHT	2055kg
GVM	3100kg
GCM	5630kg
TOWING CAPACITY	3200kg
PAYLOAD	1045kg
SEATS	5
FUEL TANK	78L
ADR FUEL CONSUMPTION	7.6L/100km
ON TEST FUEL CONSUMPTION	9.25L/100km

JAC OFFERS A SEVEN-YEAR/ UNLIMITED KILOMETRE WARRANTY WITH SEVEN YEARS CAPPED-PRICE SERVICING AND ROADSIDE ASSISTANCE

Just in case you don't know what this ute is, the grille badge leaves no question.

The gauges look like they were taken from a 1980s ghetto blaster

on gravel roads but that hard ride again makes life busy for the driver.

The T9 felt better after selecting low range and tackling some tougher low-speed obstacles. The traction control is slow to react compared to the better systems in other utes but it gets the ute up and over eventually. The T9 did need its rear diff lock to get up a familiar track that most other utes would tackle using just their ETC systems.

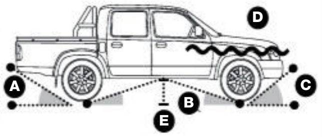
For anyone worried about a product coming from what is a relatively unknown brand in Australia, JAC offers a seven-year/unlimited kilometre warranty on the T9 with seven years capped-price servicing and roadside assistance. The company already has more than 60 dealers scattered around Australia and that number is growing. JAC also offers a range of factory accessories such as load covers, ladder racks and nudge bars to tailor your T9 to suit your needs.

The Jac T9 is one of the cheapest 4x4 utes available in Australia which will make it appealing to many but it looks and feels cheaper than the price it is being offered for. As I said at the start, the T9 feels like an older vehicle and it reminds me of midsize utes from 20 years ago in the way it rides and drives. The suspension is too stiff, resulting in a harsh and uncomfortable ride, while the engine is underwhelming just like they were two decades ago.

Sure, the T9 has the latest safety rating and tech, plus some interior niceties, but it is a long way from the class leaders in overall performance and refinement.

JAC T9 HAVEN

A	DEPARTURE ANGLE	23°
B	RAMPOVER ANGLE	N/A
C	APPROACH ANGLE	27°
D	WADING DEPTH	650mm
E	GROUND CLEARANCE	210mm



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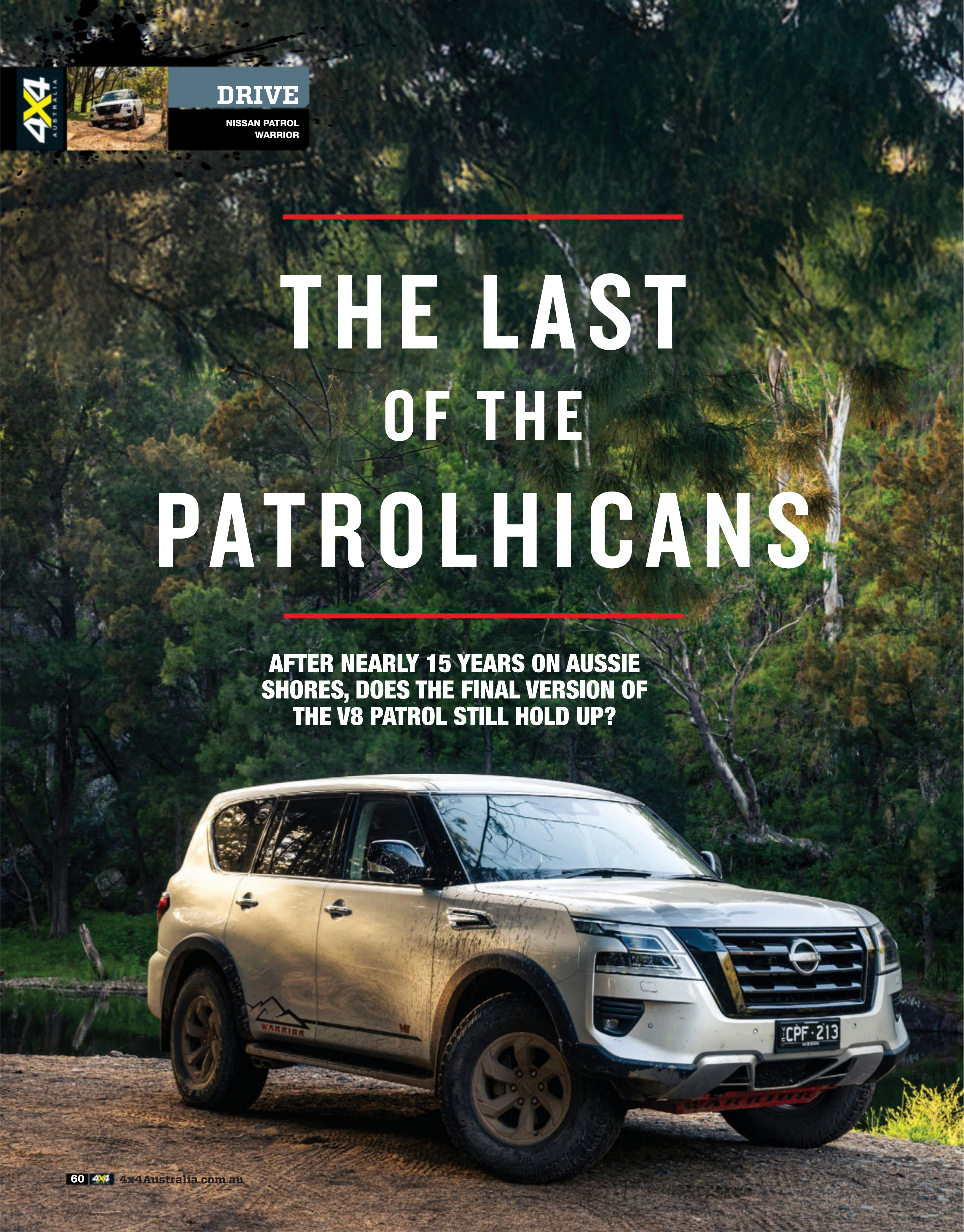

WARRIOR
CPF·213
NISSAN

THE LAST OF THE PATROLHICANS

AFTER NEARLY 15 YEARS ON AUSSIE SHORES, DOES THE FINAL VERSION OF THE V8 PATROL STILL HOLD UP?

There's something indefinable about the Y62 Patrol, as though it has some sort of X factor like a singer on a talent show rather than just being a large 4X4 wagon. With its big, brash petrol V8, fully independent suspension and a luxury interior, Australians should have hated it… but it's much more than the sum of its parts and we love it.

The Patrol seemingly has the handling and acceleration of a V8-swapped MX-5 – it defies modern physics and makes you feel as though there's no problem that can't be resolved by putting your boot into that VK56 5.6L engine and washing your soul with its glorious exhaust note. This is a powerful rig in more than one sense.

Despite the big Patrol's long list of positives, there are a few negatives to offset. The interior is now at least 10 years out of date, the V8 drinks fuel (by modern standards) like a salty sea-dog at an open bar and, no matter how you slice it, the fully independent suspension is a far cry from the live axles that gave the GQ and GU models of yesteryear their off-road prowess and cemented the Patrol nameplate as one of the best and most trustworthy in the country.

With the Y63's release not coming until late in 2026, does the latest and greatest Y62 – the Premcar-tweaked Warrior – still offer enough to entice buyers to spend six figures on an outgoing old warhorse?

CPF 213
WARRIOR

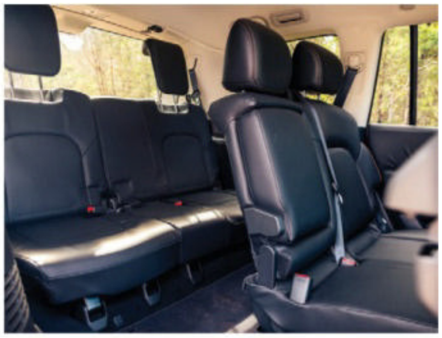
ON-ROAD

At first look the Patrol is too big, too tall, too long and too wide to ever be tagged a "good handling" vehicle. And yet, almost illogically, the Warrior holds the road brilliantly, stops and steers accurately and predictably, and overall is just a pleasure to drive. You won't be keeping up with a Nissan Skyline GTR on a twisty road, sure, but the GTR certainly won't be able to follow you across the Simpson Desert. There is a little more body roll from the two-inch higher-than-standard Warrior, and the brakes, while excellent, still have to pull up nearly three tonnes of vehicle, but all in all the acceleration and cornering are fantastic.

Inside is hardly cutting edge but it's also far from uncomfy. Technology-wise the Patrol has enough safety features to be annoying (like most new vehicles) but if you're someone who derives a sense of security from things like emergency assist braking and lane departure warnings then you won't feel like you're missing out. It has an 8.new touchscreen, which is large enough without being overbearing and is intuitive to use, while the seats are plush and wide, and you sit in them rather than on them. Other than that it's a standard Patrol Ti interior, which is not a bad thing by any means..

As an effortless mile-eater and tow rig, the Patrol is up there with the best of them. Even with the big V8 it only uses a tad over 14L/100km, which really isn't too bad considering the power on tap, but if you are lugging a trailer along with you, or have bigger tyres bolted up or are doing a lot of low-range work, then expect that figure to rise accordingly.

As a daily driver and family adventure machine though, the Patrol is not only a heavyweight contender, it's in with a real shot at the title.



AS AN EFFORTLESS MILE-EATER AND TOW RIG, THE PATROL IS UP THERE WITH THE BEST OF THEM

TRACK 3
TRACK 4

OFF-ROAD

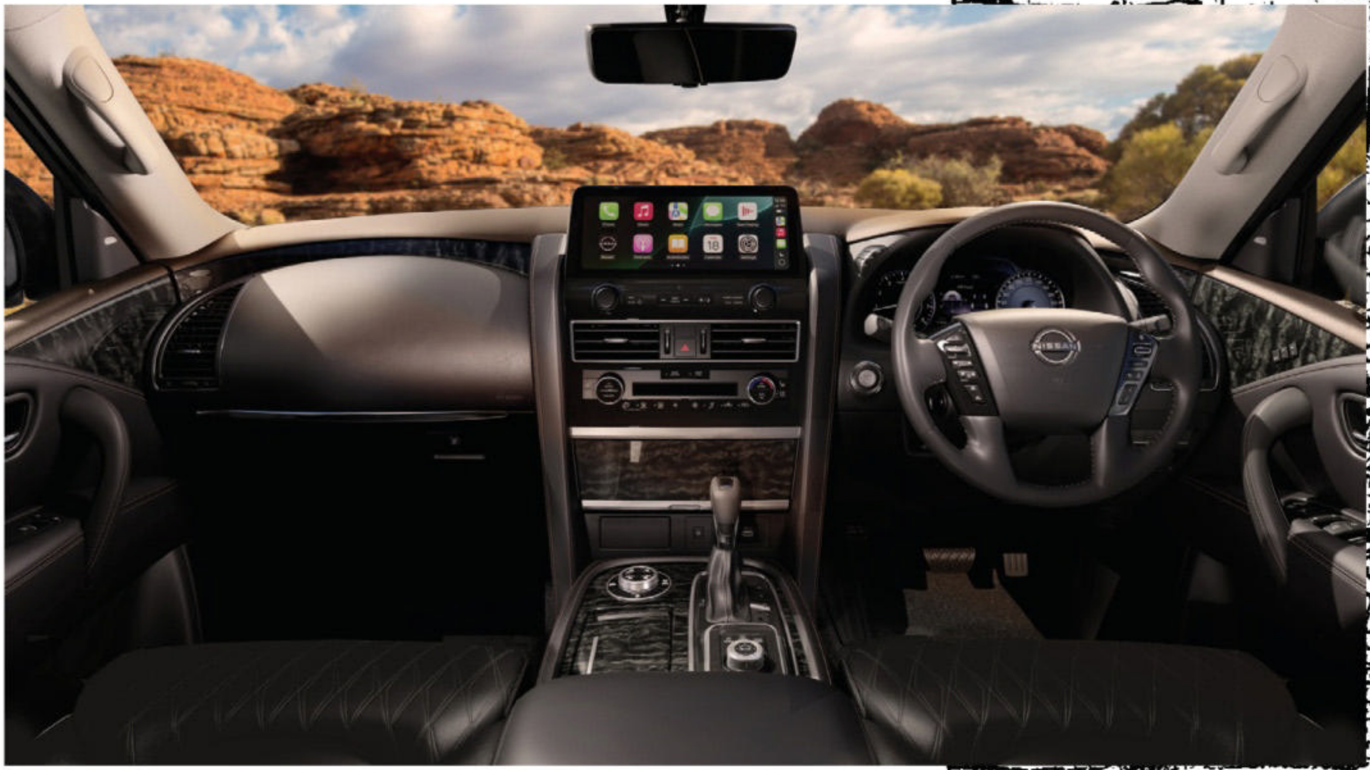
The "defies all logic" ethos transfers over to the Warrior's off-road prowess. Even with its 50mm increase in ride height and the Premcar-tuned Hydraulic Body Motion Control system, the fully independent suspension is not the starting point most of us would select for an off-road tourer. But it works so well…

Of course, if you're searching for hardcore rock-crawler performance this isn't the right droid, but for everything else the suspension is more than up to the task. There's a surprisingly useful amount of suspension travel but it will still lift wheels; no worries though, as the rear locker and traction control (which is also showing its age just quietly) are up to the job of maintaining forward progress over all but the gnarliest of obstacles.

In terms of dirt-road and sand-driving performance Patrol Warrior shines brightly. The V8 does the heavy lifting and propels you over the soft stuff laughingly easily, while the Premcar suspension soaks up corrugations and washouts at near Trophy Truck levels of refinement. If you're tackling a particularly steep climb, putting your foot down or shifting into manual mode rewards you with the bi-modal exhaust shifting to its less restricted side-exit pipe that emits a sound that's nice enough to give Jimi Hendrix a run for his money.

As a tourer, the Patrol Warrior is a weapon. Don't let the old-school "diesel is the only way to tour" way of thinking sway you. The Warrior has 140L of fuel on board which is enough to cover a respectable distance, and the only diesel engines that come close in terms of power output are the big units found in full-size American rigs. Seriously, take a Patrol for a drive and tell us we're wrong. The fact that Patrol sales have been increasing steadily over the last few years – with 2024 the highest sales numbers ever in Australia – should give you a hint that we're not. The people who own these things love them.

IN TERMS OF DIRT-ROAD AND SAND-DRIVING PERFORMANCE PATROL PRO4X WARRIOR SHINES BRIGHTLY



AUTO
4H
PUSH
4L
SAND
SNOW
ROCK
LOCK
OFF

LIVEABILITY

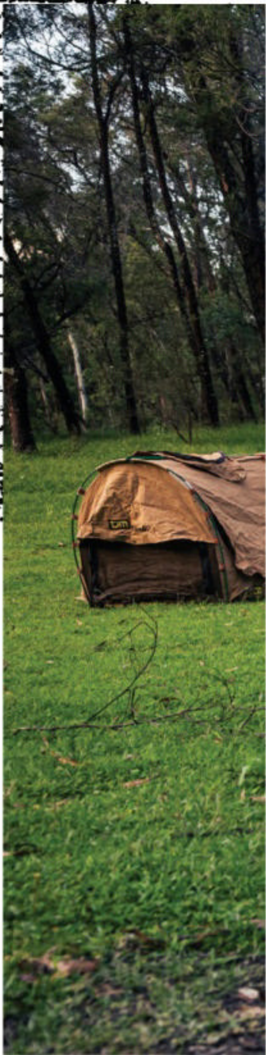
Unless you are absolutely married to the idea of a diesel, the Patrol Warrior is easily (still) as good an option as an LC300, Land Rover Defender or Ineos Grenadier (which is a very different vehicle to begin with), and it's a fair bit cheaper to boot.

The daily commute, while more expensive at the bowser, would even out over the long run with cheaper servicing, and again, the power makes for a very easy and less fatiguing drive overall, especially over big distances. At the end of the day the big deciding factor is going to be those fuel costs and whether you personally think they're worth the advantages a Y62 gives you, both on and off the road. For us, they're worth it, and buying the last of a model run means the manufacturer has got the recipe absolutely dialled in. Throw in the fact the Premcar mods are covered by the factory warranty and the Warrior starts making a lot of sense. Cheaper and more powerful than its competitors and capable enough to take you to any destination in the country with a minimum of mods.

So, is the old warhorse still worth those six-figures? Yeah, yeah it is. Long live the Y62.

HIGHER LIVING

The latest updates to the Patrol place the multimedia screen up high on the dash where it is easier to see and use



2025 UPDATE

The Patrol Warrior we had on this test was an early-2025 model but the vehicle has received a further interior update and price rise since then.

Something our drivers commented on regarding the interior of the Patrol was how dated it felt, as well as the location of the multimedia screen low in the centre stack. This screen was only added to the Patrol as part of a 'Local solution' to add Apple Carplay and Android Auto to the ageing model. It was developed locally by Nissan Australia with help from its partners at Premcar… but was still a compromise.

Now the interior has been updated again in what we expect will be the last change to the model before the Y63 arrives late in 2026. This time it's a Nissan factory update reflecting the dashboard that was available in international (left hand drive) markets but until now never in Australia.

Addressing our comments on the low-set location of the multimedia screen, this factory update places the new 12.3-inch screen higher on the stack where it is easier for the driver to see and access. The new system again offers wireless Apple Carplay and Android Auto, as well as inbuilt sat-nav.

The multimedia screen is joined by a 7.0-inch driver information screen in the gauge cluster and, thankfully, the Patrol's beautiful, large analogue tacho and speedometer are retained.

Other changes include refreshed interior trims, a standard Around-View Monitor with moving object detection, a chilled center console bin and a premium Bose sound system in the top of the range Ti-L model.

The updates have come with small price rises on some models with the Ti now starting at $102,100, the Patrol Warrior at $105,660 and the Ti-L at $102,100 plus on-road costs.

Nissan was also keen to point out that the updated Patrol benefits from the brand's new 10-year/300,000km warranty when serviced with Nissan.

2:37 PM
19°C
Tire Pressures (psi)
35
30
35
34
33
34
ON ROAD
AUTO
A 14.0 km
P
862km
80
60
40
20

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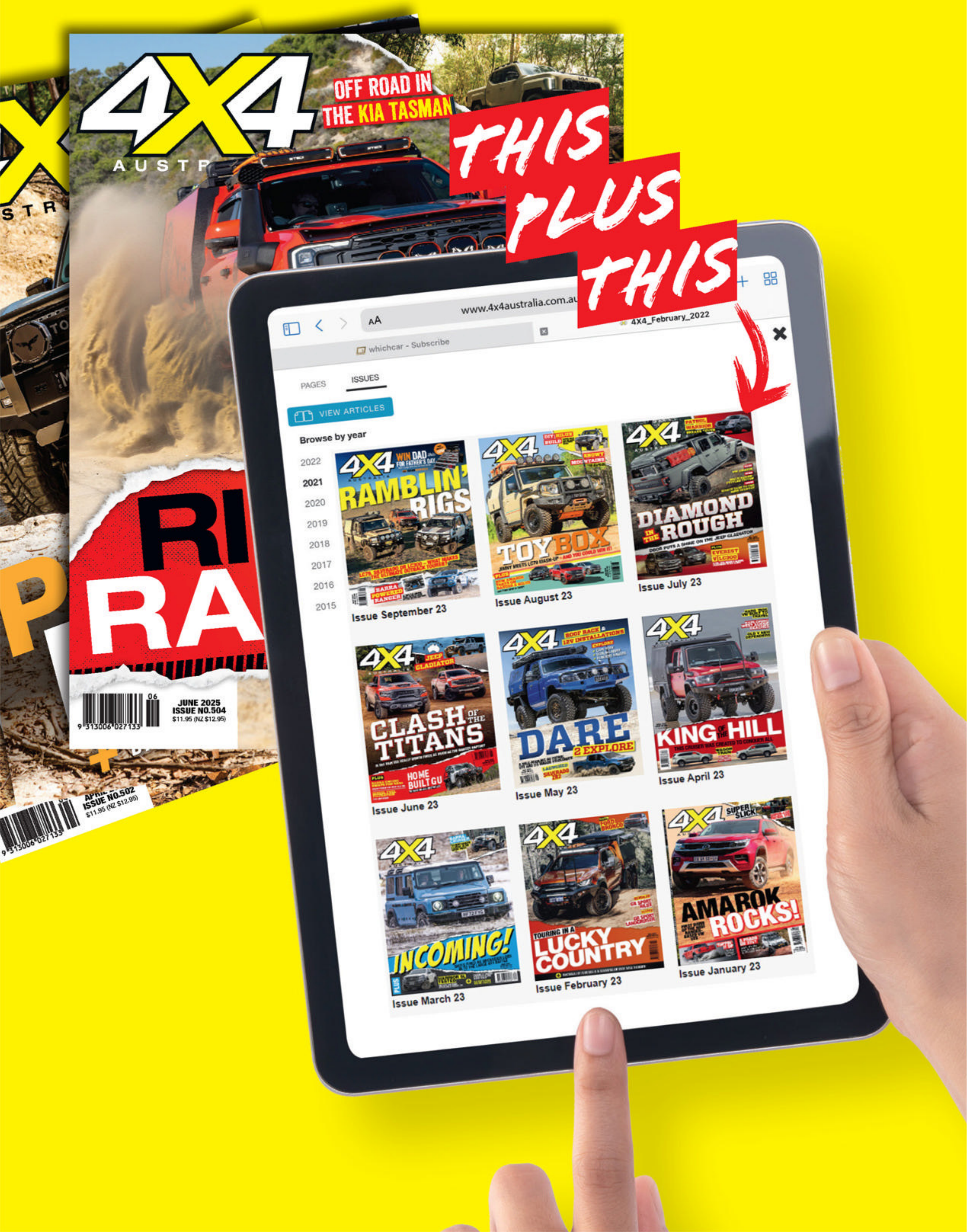
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RAMBLIN' RIGS
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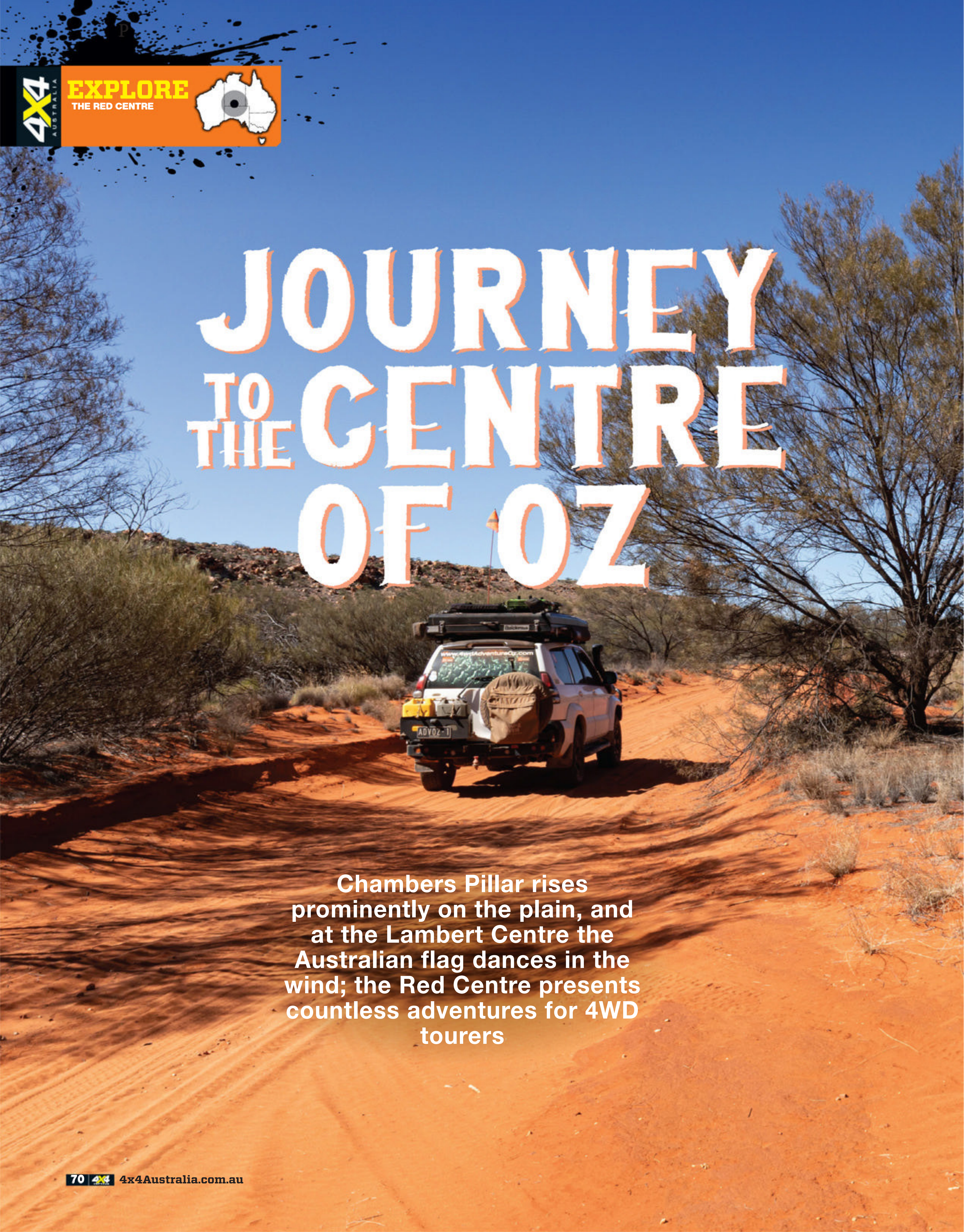
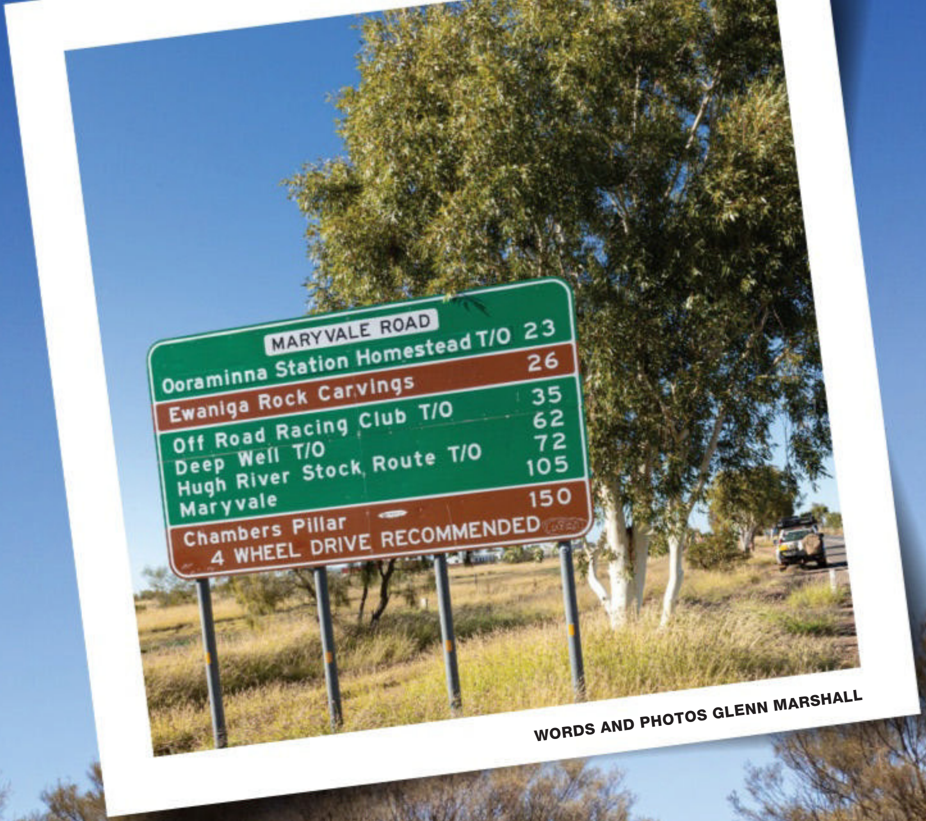
DARE 2 EXPLORE
KING OF THE HILL
INCOMING!
LUCKY COUNTRY
AMAROK ROCKS!



JOURNEY TO THE CENTRE OF OZ

Chambers Pillar rises prominently on the plain, and at the Lambert Centre the Australian flag dances in the wind; the Red Centre presents countless adventures for 4WD tourers


MARYVALE ROAD
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Hugh River Stock Route T/O 72
Maryvale 105
Chambers Pillar 150
4 WHEEL DRIVE RECOMMENDED

WORDS AND PHOTOS GLENN MARSHALL

CHAMBERS PILLAR HISTORICAL RESERVE
PARKS AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION NORTHERN TERRITORY

When explorer John Stuart first sighted the sandstone column in 1860. Towering 50m above the surrounding plain, he decided to name it after a mate who contributed to his travel fund, James Chambers. It has remained a significant landmark on the edge of the Simpson Desert ever since and many passers-by have tagged the rockface as a record of their visit. Thankfully, this practice is no longer permitted, as seeing ‘Craig & Shazza’ carved next to ‘WM HAYES’ just doesn’t look right.

Alice Springs is the hub of the Red Centre and is a great place to fuel up, stock up and wash up. On leaving Alice, follow the signs towards the airport and turn right onto Maryvale Road. The bitumen stretches for 35km now, much more than on my last trip this way, but that doesn’t make this adventure any less exciting as Chambers Pillar is an outstanding destination in the Red Centre. It is a spectacular site enjoyed by explorers, pastoralists and graffiti artists since Stuart first discovered it, and I was looking forward to revisiting it.

RAILWAY ROAD

The Maryvale Road follows the old Ghan Railway through low-lying scrubland and rocky outcrops. The first train left Adelaide in 1891, but the railway line didn't reach Alice Springs until 1929 and Darwin until 2001. You'll find water towers and abandoned buildings along various stretches of the road, and you can almost picture yourself back in the days when riding the Ghan was an epic adventure – quite different from the silver service you would experience today.

You pass through low-lying scrubland and rocky outcrops as the Maryvale Road also follows the Finke Desert racetrack, where Australia's premier desert race takes place in June every year. It is one of the most demanding off-road races in the world for motorcycles, side-by-sides and racecars. Once the blacktop ends, the unsealed road has a well-maintained hard base mainly because of the amount of traffic that travels this route these days.

It is recommended that you stop to explore the Napwerte/Ewaninga Rock Carvings, one of Central Australia's earliest and richest art sites. The petroglyphs are a sacred site for senior Arrernte men, so photographs aren't allowed. The marked 680m walk is graded as easy, and the best time to visit is in the early morning or late afternoon. Take your time and absorb the mystical vibe of this sacred place.

As you travel south on the approach to the turn-off to Deep Well Station, one of the region's historic cattle stations, the landscape transitions into gibber plains and spinifex-covered sand dunes. I was fortunate enough to visit and stay with the Hayes family in 2006, as they were friends with my parents. It was wonderful to have the opportunity to experience pastoral life in this part of the outback.

The road crosses through the Deep Well Range before passing by the Hugh Stock Route, another way to access the Maryvale Road from the Stuart Highway, just south of Stuarts Well Roadhouse. The Hugh River crossing is a seasonal waterway that may have some water after rains.

From here, you'll see scattered groves of desert oaks and mulga with 19km to the Chambers Pillar turn-off. Maryvale Station is a working cattle station with a store, but on this trip, there was a 'Closed until further notice' sign, which was disappointing. I was looking forward to an ice cream. Nearby is the small Titjikala Aboriginal community, which has a strong Arrernte cultural presence and is known for its Aboriginal art.

The road from Maryvale Station deteriorates a little, but it's still a more leisurely drive than it used to be. There are some rough sections and deep sand at the dry water crossings, but it's not a challenging drive along its 45km length. The landscape is broken with deep red sand dunes and occasional rocky escarpments. Keep an eye out for thorny devils scuttling across the track, well-camouflaged against the red dirt. You'll see a sign asking for firewood to be collected over the next 3km, as wood cannot be collected within the Chambers Pillar Reserve.

The biggest challenge of the drive is crossing Charlotte Range, and traction control and low-range will prove beneficial in ensuring you get up there without damaging the track or your vehicle. The same goes for descending on the other side, which heads towards Chambers Pillar Campground. Then, you'll reach a gate; please leave it as you find it.

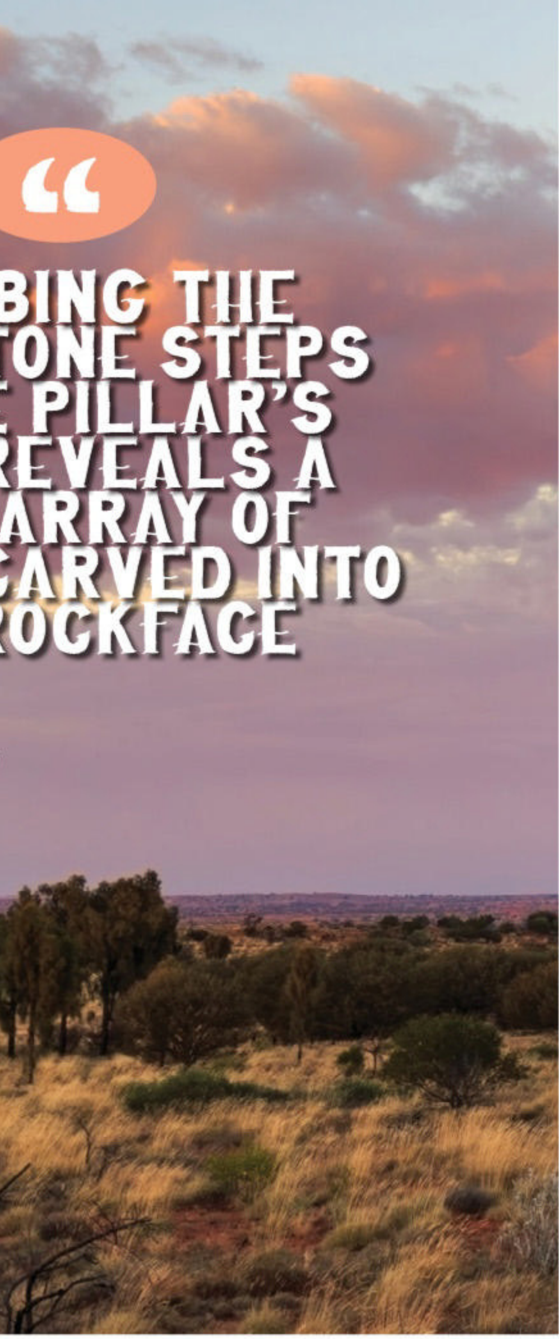
Welcome to
Ewaninga Rock
Carvings (Napwerte)

Ewaninga is full of petroglyphs, however photos aren't allowed

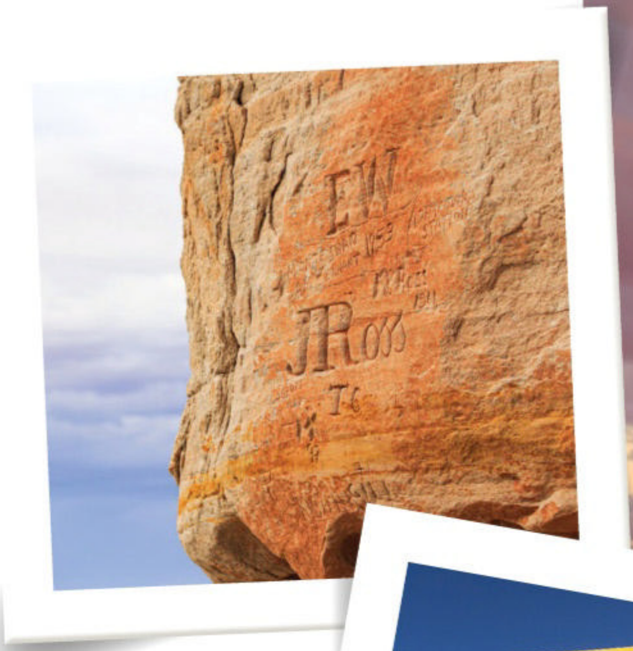
4x4
RECOMMENDED
RODINGA
BUNDOOMA
FINKE

> “ STOP TO EXPLORE THE NAPWERTE/EWANINGA ROCK CARVINGS, ONE OF CENTRAL AUSTRALIA’S EARLIEST AND RICHEST ART SITES

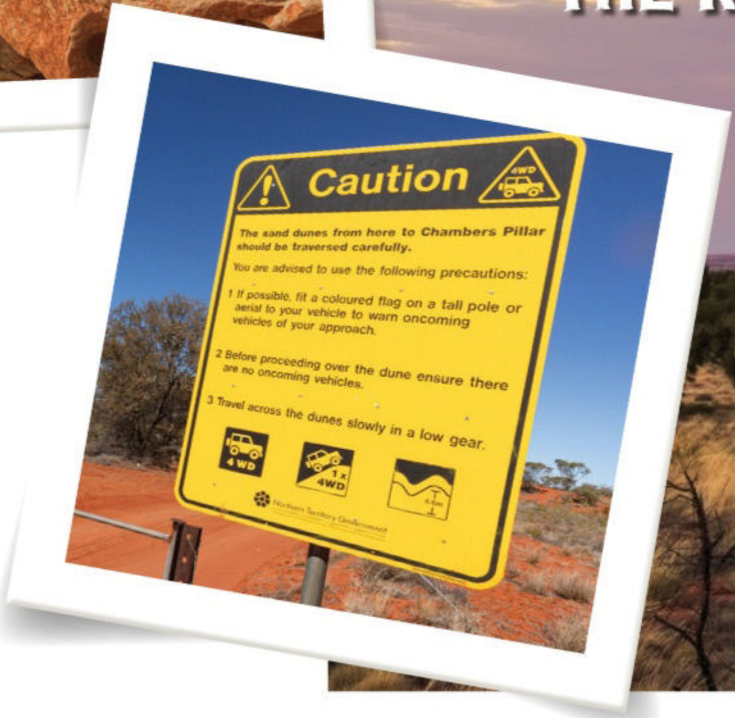
Take the old Ghan Heritage Trail to Finke



> “CLIMBING THE SANDSTONE STEPS TO THE PILLAR’S BASE REVEALS A VAST ARRAY OF NAMES CARVED INTO THE ROCKFACE



Some old tags


Caution
4WD
The sand dunes from here to Chambers Pillar should be traversed carefully.
You are advised to use the following precautions:
1 If possible, fit a coloured flag on a tall pole or aerial to your vehicle to warn oncoming vehicles of your approach.
2 Before proceeding over the dune ensure there are no oncoming vehicles.
3 Travel across the dunes slowly in a low gear.
4WD
1x 4WD
Northern Territory Government

Once you hit the dunes it is wise to be cautious of oncoming vehicles

CHAMBERS PILLAR

The Maryvale Road follows the old Ghan Railway through low-lying scrubland and rocky outcrops. The first train left Adelaide in 1891, but the railway line didn’t reach Alice Springs until 1929 and Darwin until 2001. You’ll find water towers and abandoned buildings along various stretches of the road, and you can almost picture yourself back in the days when riding the Ghan was an epic adventure – quite different from the silver service you would experience today.

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The road crosses through the Deep Well Range before passing by the Hugh Stock Route, another way to access the Maryvale Road from the Stuart Highway,

CHAMBERS PILLAR

Not far to go now
CHAMBERS PILLAR 30

The southern side of the range is an easier climb

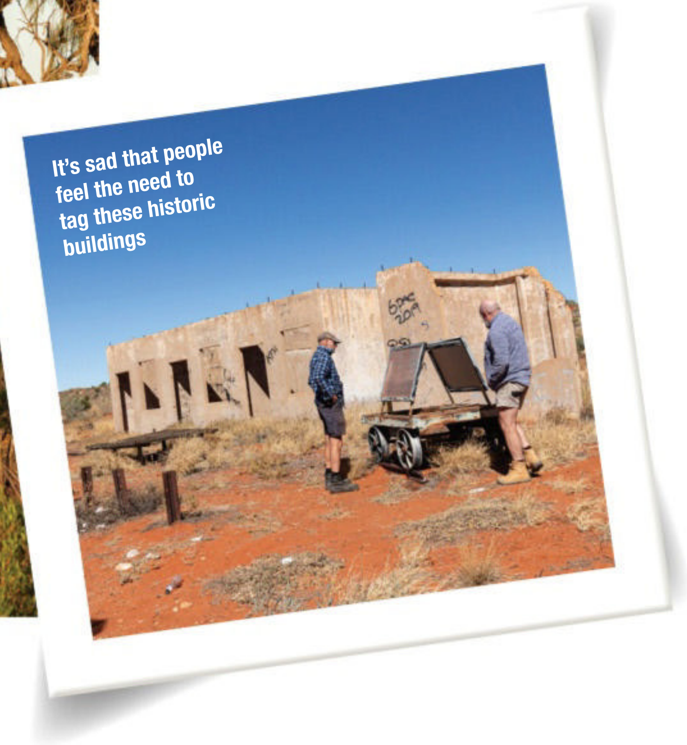
THE LAMBERT CENTRE

Finke is a small Aboriginal community known for its rich Pitjantjatjara and Arrernte cultural heritage. It is also famous as the southern end of the Finke Desert Race. This is a great spot to refuel, grab lunch and explore a little local history before continuing to the Lambert Centre of Australia. Fuel is available 24/7, but the Aputula Store is closed between 1pm and 2pm on weekdays. It is best to call ahead to check opening times and fuel availability before you get there on (08) 8956 0968.

From Finke, it's only 35km to the Lambert Centre, the geographical centre of mainland Australia. Take Finke Road and head towards Kulgera before turning north at the signpost. The narrow track is rough and splits in places as drivers seek a smoother route. Lowering tyre pressures made our drive more comfortable, and it wasn't long before we reached the end of the track.

At the Lambert Centre, you'll find a flagpole monument that resembles Canberra's Parliament House flagpole… alongside a million friendly flies. Camping is permitted, and once the flies have gone, enjoy the peace, quiet and remoteness while viewing the stunning night sky. Our destination was somewhere else, though, the historic Old Andado.

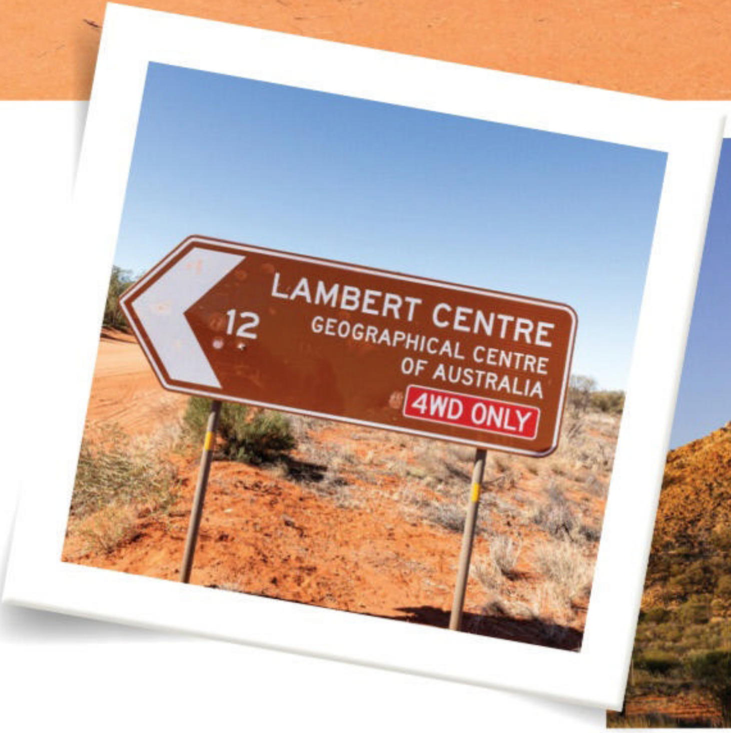
It is a special place to camp

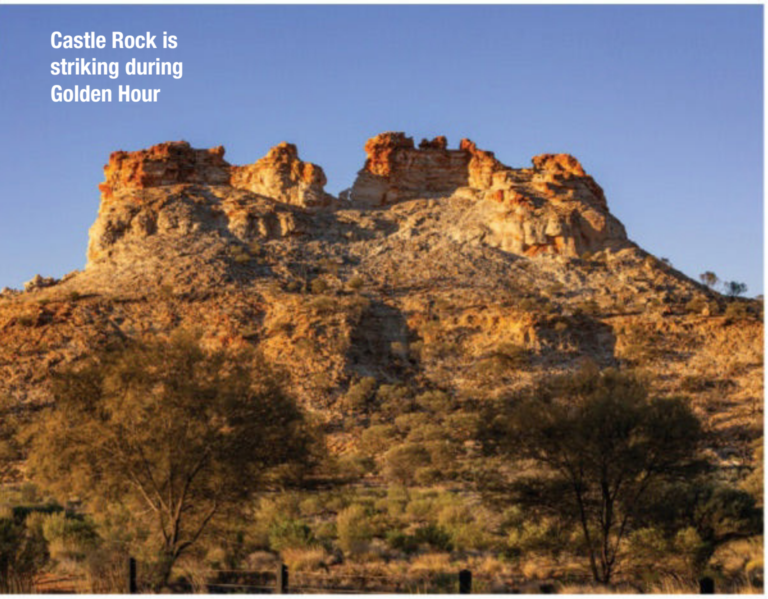


It's sad that people feel the need to tag these historic buildings

CURDIMURKA SIDING, SA

> “FROM FINKE, IT’S ONLY 35KM TO THE LAMBERT CENTRE, THE GEOGRAPHICAL CENTRE OF MAINLAND AUSTRALIA


LAMBERT CENTRE
12
GEOGRAPHICAL CENTRE
OF AUSTRALIA
4WD ONLY


Castle Rock is striking during Golden Hour

MOLLY CLARK

Molly still watches over her beloved home

OLD ANDADO

From Finke, the drive to Old Andado continues the remote 4x4 journey through the arid heart of the NT, covering approximately 120km of rugged desert terrain. The track takes you through red sand dunes, mulga scrub and gibber plains, leading to the well-preserved home of the legendary Molly Clark. You'll also pass watering holes for the cattle and well-worn paths crisscrossing the open plain. If you encounter a gate, leave it as you found it, and the station owners will be happy. We spotted a dingo enjoying a drink from a leaking waterline; he wasn't shy and stayed around for some photos.

I've admired how tough Molly Clark must have been to live out here for so long. The homestead had no windows, fly screens, air conditioners or insulation. There were snakes, spiders, ants and sand. In summer, temperatures exceeded 50°C. There was no power until a generator was installed in the 1970s, so Molly and her family had to rely on kerosene lamps for light. Communication with the outside world was via radio telephone until a satellite phone tower was erected in the 2000s.

The first homestead was constructed of mud brick and iron, although little of it remains. The current homestead uses coolabah, mulga and acacia peuce for the frame and whitewashed corrugated and ripple iron for the walls and roof. The flooring in the original two-room section of the house is cement over ash and animal fat. The surrounding verandah was enclosed and partitioned to create extra rooms, while the kitchen and laundry/bathroom were added in the late 1920s.

When Molly sadly passed away in Alice Springs in 2012, she had lived at Old Andado for more than 50 years. At her request, she was returned to the homestead and laid to rest in a place she truly loved. Molly's epitaph reads, "At home in the country you loved. When the times get tough, the tough get going."

The campground is spacious and

> MOLLY'S EPITAPH READS, "AT HOME IN THE COUNTRY YOU LOVED. WHEN THE TIMES GET TOUGH, THE TOUGH GET GOING."

MacDonnell
Regional Council
WELCOME TO
Finke
Aputula
Many voices, one dream, building a quality desert lifestyle

You can fuel up and stock up at the store in Finke

There are patches of bulldust along the route

The house is just as Molly left it and visitors should leave it that way too

mostly flat, with sheltered fire pits scattered throughout. A rustic camp kitchen has running water, an old barbecue and benches for setting up your camp. When water is available, a refreshing donkey shower and flushing toilet are included in the camping fee. It is an excellent setup for such a remote site.

Exploring the remote tracks of the Red Centre offers a blend of history, stunning desert landscapes and rugged adventure. From the sunrise glow at Chambers Pillar to the relics of the Old Ghan Railway, Australia's heart at the Lambert Centre and the historic Old Andando, each destination immerses you in outback isolation and beauty. A 4x4 is essential, but the reward is an authentic and unforgettable experience.

RED CENTRE

FAST FACTS

NEAREST TOWN: Alice Springs has everything you need. The Aputula Community Store in Finke sells a range of supplies and fuel.

WHEN TO GO: The cooler months from April to September are best, but the roads may close after rain.

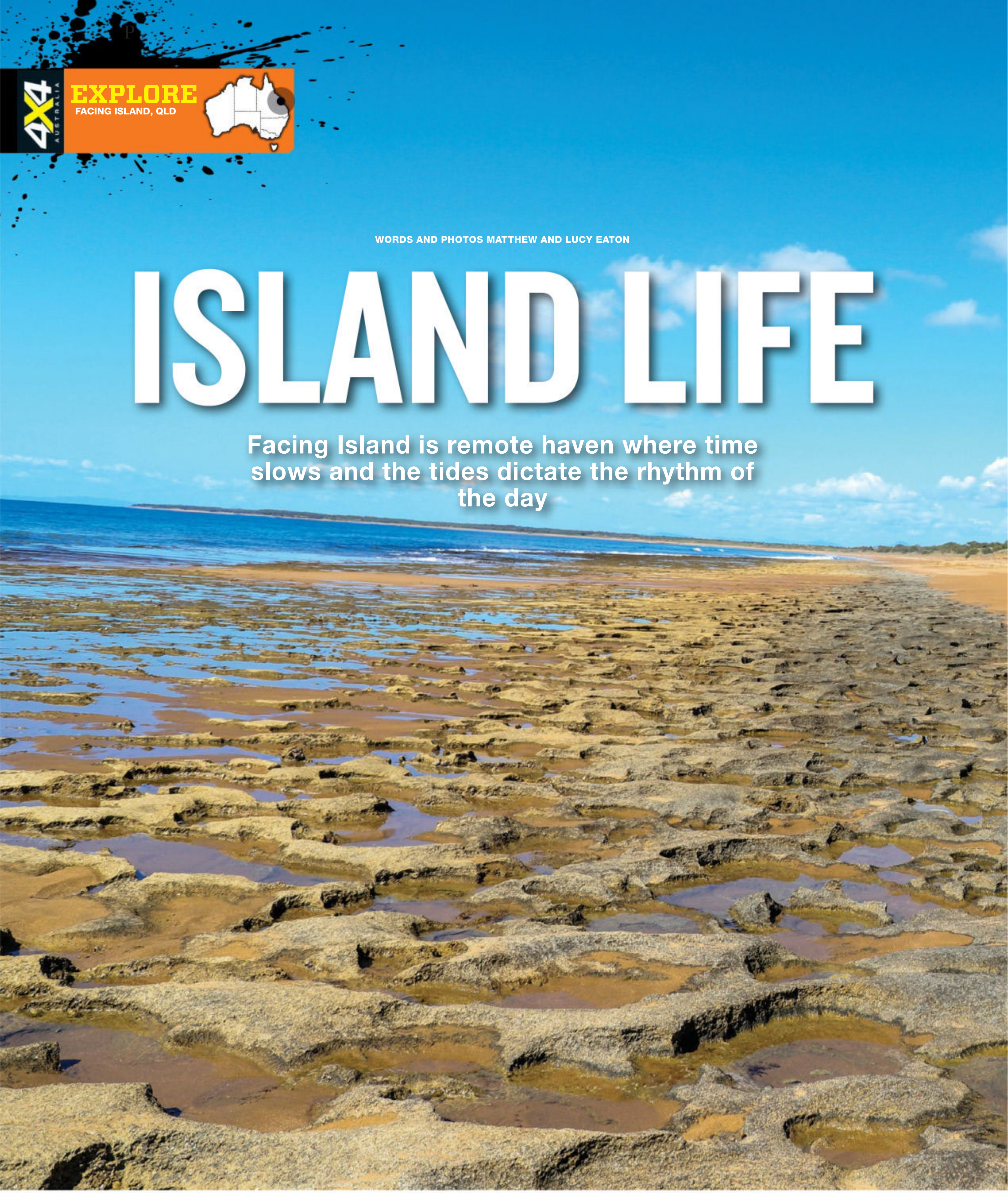
ACCOMMODATION:
Chambers Pillar: Two designated campgrounds are provided, both wood fire pits and pit toilets. $10 per adult, $5 per child (5-17 years), $25 per family.

LAMBERT CENTRE: Bush camping, no facilities

OLD ANDANDO: Large camping area offering a bush kitchen with barbecue (BYO gas), scattered fire pits (BYO wood), flushing toilets and a donkey shower (when water is available). $10 per person per night, paid via Direct Deposit to Old Andando Charitable Trust BSB: 633-000 Account: 152845418

WHAT TO TAKE: A compressor and tyre gauge, tyre repair kit, firewood, food and water. Take out what you take in.

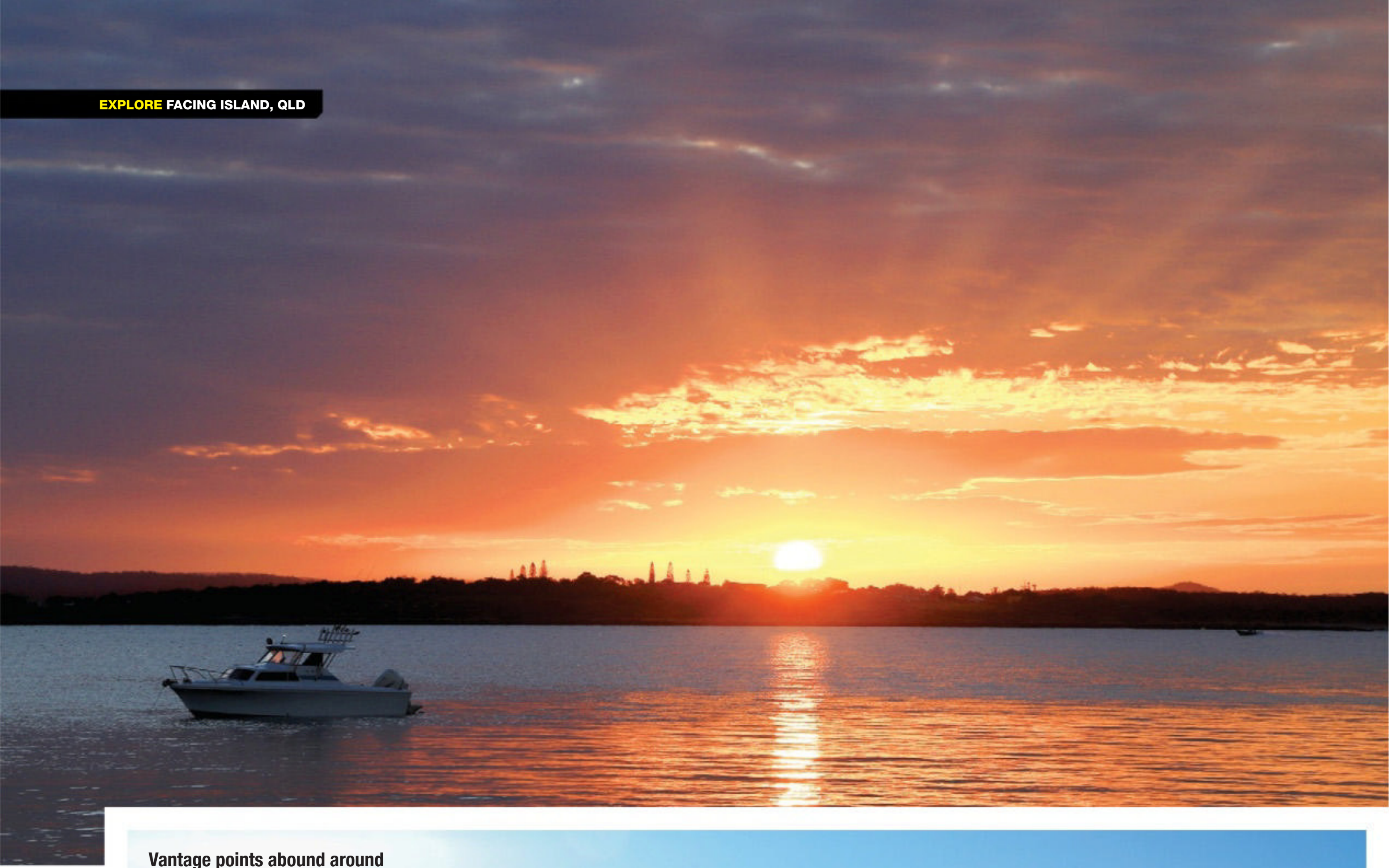
DIFFICULTY: The route is suitable for 4x4 vehicles, off-road campers and vans. However, carry extra food, water, vehicle equipment, recovery and safety gear, as the roads may be closed after rain.



WORDS AND PHOTOS MATTHEW AND LUCY EATON

ISLAND LIFE

Facing Island is remote haven where time slows and the tides dictate the rhythm of the day



Vantage points abound around the island so be sure to take the time to enjoy the outlook.

Leave the mainland behind as you head out on an island adventure.

Whether you're a seasoned adventurer or a first time explorer, Facing Island promises an unforgettable escape into nature, and what better way to let the four-legged friends enjoy the salt air too with dog-friendly camping on offer. Although there are permanent residents that live on this island, there are no shops to purchase supplies, so you need to be fully self sufficient for your time there, so grab everything you need from Gladstone before you board the barge.

Lining up in Gladstone Harbour, the excitement will be high as you're rolling onto the Curtis Island barge, especially when it's a place you've never been to before. The experienced and capable deckhands work tirelessly to ensure everyone is loaded on time to prevent delays. Once the ferry has departed ensure you take this time to air down your tyres. The ferry also services other local islands such as Quoin Island and Curtis Island as well, so depending on how it has been loaded you might have a few detours on your way to your destination.

> Once the ferry has departed ensure you take this time to air down your tyres

CURTIS FERRY SERVICES
CURTIS FERRY
SERVICES

The ferry services a few island off Gladstoneso there a few stops on the way out to Facing.

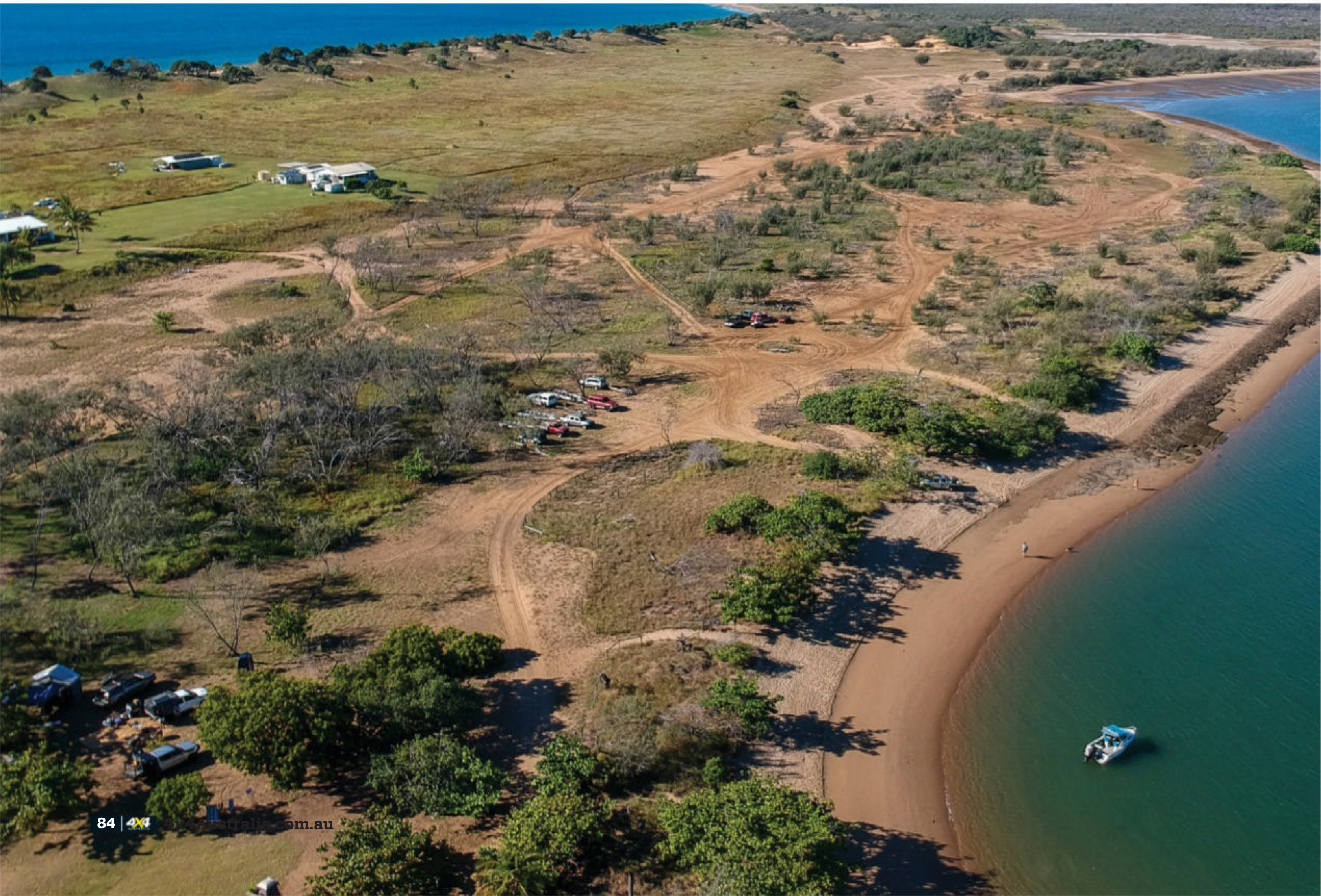
After an hour or so the drawbridge lowers and you drive straight onto the beach and hook a right-hand turn to avoid the other campers who have lined up on the beach waiting to depart on the return ferry. Roll those windows down and let that island breeze in… your holidays have just begun.

It's a short seven-minute drive along a sandy track before you pop out on the beach, wet the tyres through a washout then head back onto the inland track. When you spot the many boat trailers lined up, that's when you've arrived at the entrance to the campground.

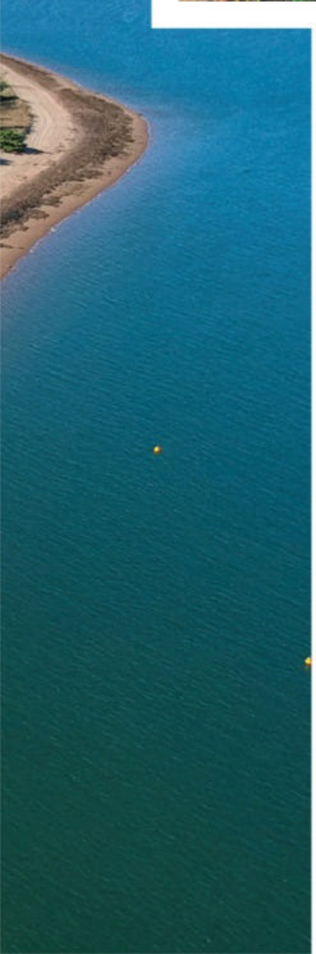
Locating your campsite is easy thanks to large numbered identifier pegs. Take your time to set up and enjoy the view. Every angle of the facilitated campground has something different. The mornings are elevated by the cacophony of the island's locals including red-tailed black cockatoos whose rudimentary singing at sunrise attempts to serenade you throughout the morning, signalling the dawning of a new day and a new adventure.

A short walk from camp will find you sinking your feet into untamed shores where you can launch your vessel straight off the beach and drop the anchor, making it easy to keep a watchful eye on your boat when it's not in use; it's very handy to

If you want to swap the boat for the 4x4, the island offers plenty of tracks to explore



Campsites are well marked and grassy. You need to be fully self-sufficient.



Fisherman wil be well rewarded on Facing Island

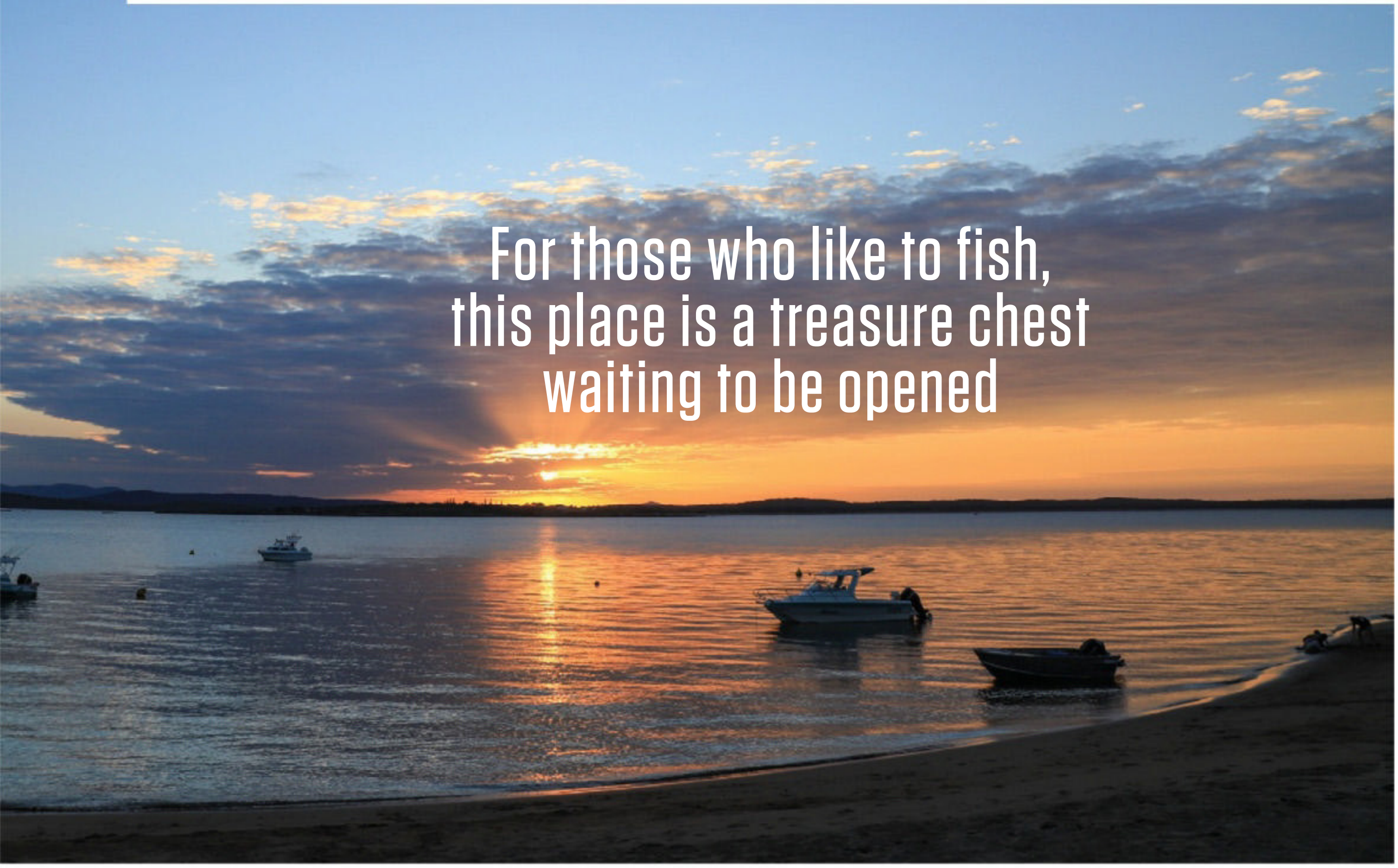
A amper trailer, tent or a swag will be your accomodation on the island. There are no shops here

pack and go for a day of fishing right out the front of camp. For those who like to fish, this place is a treasure chest waiting to be opened, and it doesn't matter if you're wetting a line straight off the beach and reeling in a little flatty or you're out in the bay near the surrounding islands – you'll pick yourself up a rock cod or a tasty tusky, and there are plenty of other species out there especially if you head out to the ocean side.

The golden hour is something to be enjoyed on the beach with a cold beverage while watching the last light of the day melting into the night. You will not be disappointed with your sunset photos, that's for sure! But be sure to pack the bug spray because you'll need it – the midges and mozzies arrive in waves, relentlessly filling the air.

If you want to swap the boat keys for the 4x4 keys, the island offers plenty of tracks to explore, including one in particular that traces south down the east coast all the way to the township of Gatcombe. Along the way you will experience easy beach runs, rocky outcrops, natural caves, uninterrupted

Set up camp and launch your boat straight off the beach .



For those who like to fish, this place is a treasure chest waiting to be opened

The island is criss-crossed with tracks to ezplore in your 4x4

views over a mirror-like ocean, overgrown bush tracks and secluded beaches. It makes for a great day trip and adds another element to your island holiday.

Tracks criss-cross all over the island and it is easy to get lost amongst it all, but that's what generates the fun. It's quite amazing how varied the landscape is as you drive across the island, and this will have you looking for more wonderful spots to enjoy while you are out and about making the most of your time there.

Facing Island has something for everyone, even if you just want to relax and read a book on the beach in the sunshine. Do what fits in with your own needs and you'll find yourself going home feeling refreshed and reset, your cup overflowing with memories and a pocket full of photos to brag on socials and be the envy of your mates.

Grab yourself a coldie, set the camera on a tripod and enjoy the stunning sunsets

FACING ISLAND, QLD

FAST FACTS

CAMPING: $7 pp/pn for unpowered beach sites

FACILITIES: Toilets, no showers

GETTING THERE: Travelling to Facing Island is easy from Gladstone via Curtis Ferry Services. Boarding can be difficult for some as you need to reverse onto the ferry, but the deckhands are very helpful. The ferry takes about an hour from the harbour and you are dropped off right on the beach, so air down before arrival. The Oaks Campground is a seven-minute drive from the drop-off point. The ferry costs $346 for a vehicle and 4m trailer.

GETTING BACK: It's the same deal with the return ferry when you are on your way home, reversing onto the barge directly from the beach can have its challenges and the crew do their best to manoeuvre the ferry and assist where they can to get you onboard safely.

FERRY:
www.curtisferryservices.com.au

CAMPING PERMITS:
www.gladstoneregion.info/explore/gladstone/accommodation/the-oaks-camping-ground

MORE INFORMATION:
A vehicle access permit is not required for Facing Island. There are no shops, so you need to be self sufficient and take everything you'll need with you; you can source supplies in Gladstone.
Fires are prohibited.

X BAR
BY HAYMAN REESE

X BAR BY HAYMAN REESE
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NOW AVAILABLE TO FIT TOYOTA PRADO 150

THE ULTIMATE OFF-ROAD TOWBAR

With custom forged, rated recovery points.

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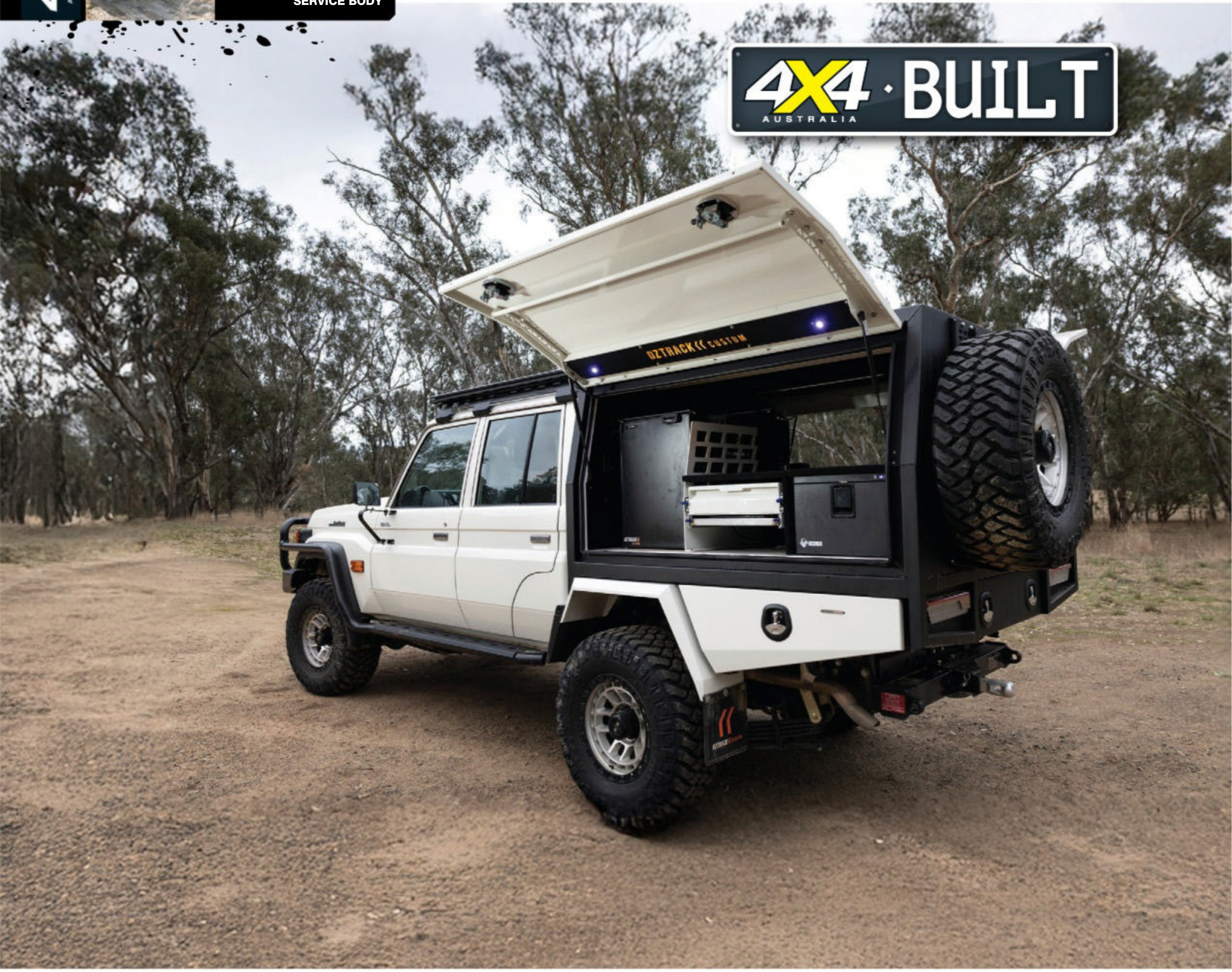

4X4 AUSTRALIA · BUILT
OZTRACK CUSTOM

WORDS MATT RAUDONIKIS

BODY BUILDING

OUR LAND CRUISER 79 HAS BEEN RESHAPED WITH A FRESH ALUMINIUM SERVICE BODY FROM OZ TRACK CUSTOM, AND WE'VE LOADED IT WITH GREAT GEAR!

A key element of all of all our ute builds has been replacing the factory tub with a purpose-built, touring service body, and we were not about to let that opportunity pass with the build of our VDJ79 LandCruiser.

When seeking a company to partner with us for the custom body, we turned to Ben Kingham at Oz Track Custom in NSW. Ben's grey LC79 was featured in 4X4 Australia magazine last year and was a runner-up on the Custom 4x4 Of The Year voting. Ben's own Cruiser didn't feature a canopy on it but we were impressed with the style and detail we saw on the builds he had done for Oz Track customers, so we were pretty excited to have the company on board for our build.

Oz track Custom is in the Riverina town of Griffith and as well as the work it does for locals, including many farmers' trucks, Ben has customers coming from all across Australia to commission his services that include custom trays and canopies, as well as general 4x4 fitting, maintenance and full touring builds.

For our 79 we wanted a full chassis-mounted service body set up to hold all the touring essentials. Chassis mounted offers the advantage of less weight and a lower floor/loading height than canopies mounted on a tray. The downside is that you can't easily remove the canopy and use the vehicle as a ute as you can with a tray-mounted canopy, but we have no intention of ever needing to do that.

Our shed was filling up with kit to go into the 79 including a pair of Bushman fridge/freezers, an MSA 4x4 drawer, a slimline battery from Custom Lithium, and a full suite of Redarc electronics, so we were keen to get somewhere to house them.

Oz Track's service bodies are made using 3mm aluminium sheet over an aluminium box-section frame, making them both lightweight and strong, and well-suited to use on a 4x4 vehicle. Oz Track designs the bodies on CAD so that they can customise them to to suit requirements, be it for a single- or double-cab ute, any make or model, chassis or tray mounted, and in variable configurations.

Oz Track works with its sister company which is a metal fabrication business across town where the bodies and associated doors, brackets, partitions and drawers are formed. All the components are laser cut and folded before they are powder coated locally and delivered up the road to the Oz Track workshop for assembly and fitting.

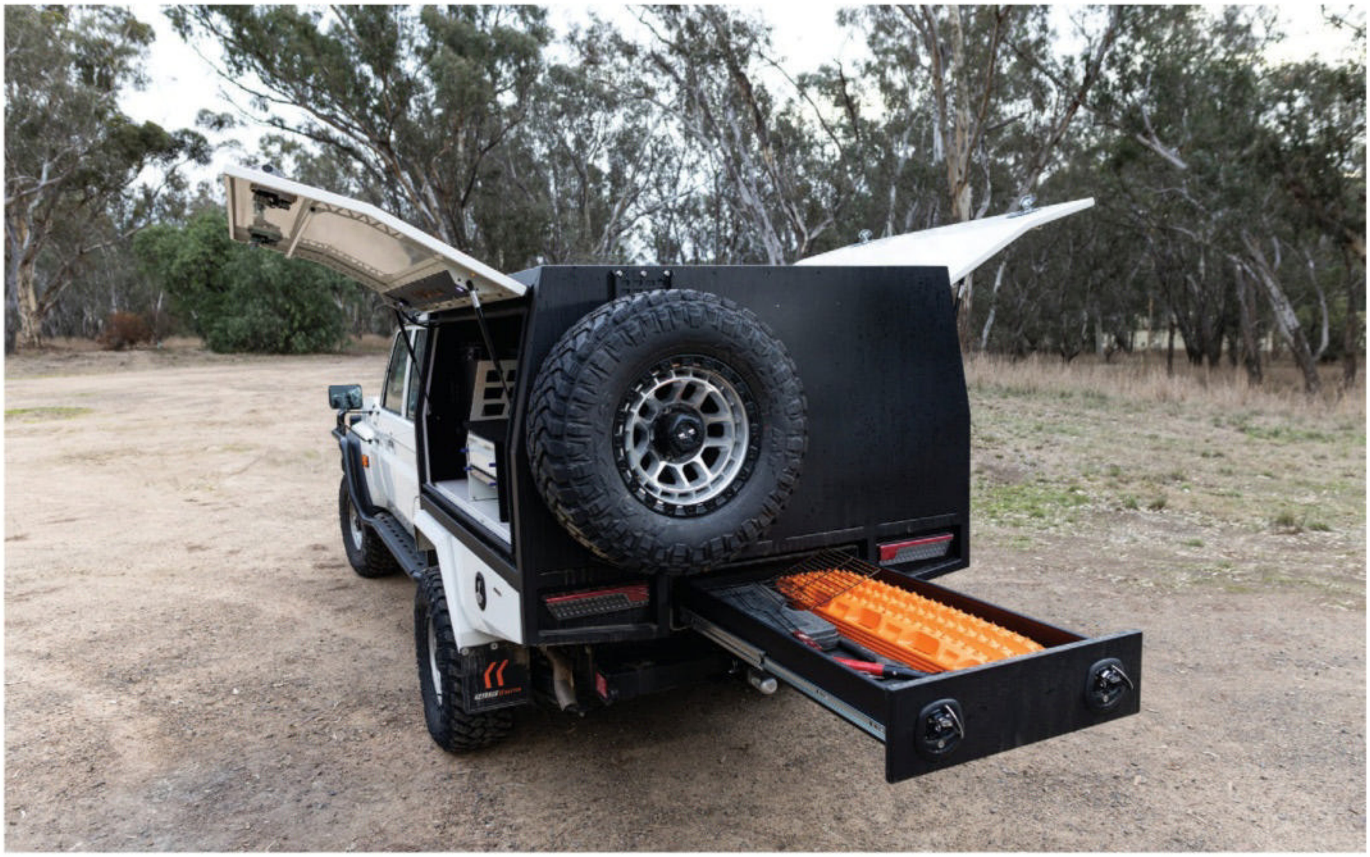
TIDY
All of the electrical products and wiring are neatly tucked away but remain accessible

[redacted]

OZTRACK
CUSTOM
180B

ONE STOP SHOP
Oz Track is the place to go for a custom tray, canopy or a full touring 4x4 build.

[redacted]



POWER SOURCE
Slimline lithium battery powers the appliances which are managed by the Redarc sysem.

LIFT OFF

The first step for our LandCruiser was removing the Toyota steel tray in readiness for the service body, and while this was being done, work started on assembling our canopy. This involved assembling the side doors and fitting latches and lighting before they can be fitted to the canopy, assembling the trundle drawer and any internal drawers, assembling and fitting the mudguards, and preparing the body for any accessories that will be going inside it and on it.

A major part of building the body is the wiring to power all the accessories and lighting that go into a modern touring 4x4 setup. Oz Track's Anthony took care of all this work, meticulously creating the harnesses and routing them through the canopy to hook up with the accessories, the Custom Lithium 200Ah Ultra Slim battery, and the Redarc management and control system.

All of the electrical systems and accessories were fitted to the body and tested before it was mounted to the LandCruiser.

Having to accommodate the two Bushman fridges – one an 80-litre upright fridge and the other a drawer fridge – in the body did provide a small challenge but nothing that couldn't be overcome. We wanted to keep them both on the passenger side of the vehicle as that would be the side covered by the awning, and the side for food storage and prep.

Ben set the upright fridge closer to the front of the body and the drawer fridge at the back, and made a drawer to fill the space in between them that houses an induction cooktop and includes storage for utensils and other kit. A shelf was then fabricated to make a flat surface over them, while the Redarc inverter was mounted behind them from where we can power the cooktop and other appliances.

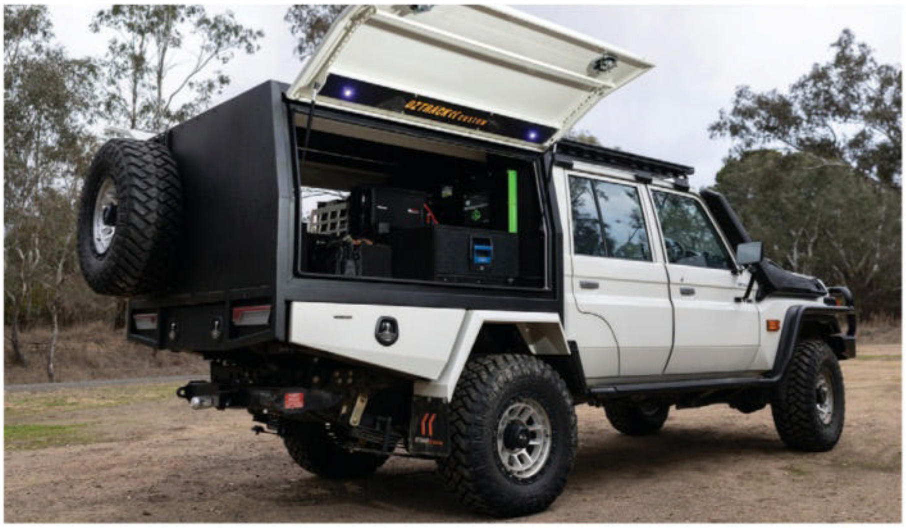
We've kept the driver's side of the canopy relatively bare for general storage with plenty of space for bigger items like swags and storage tubs. The MSA roller drawer is on this side too, where it provides quick and easy access to anything we stow in there. There are plenty of drawer systems available these days but the MSA 4x4 ones set the standard for design and usability.

Other storage options on the Oz Track body include the huge trundle drawer that slides out from under the back of the Cruiser. It's great for things that might get grubby but you still need quick and easy access to, such as recovery gear, axe and a spade. There are also a pair of smaller tool boxes under either side of the body.

Overall it's a functional and practical layout which is just what you want for life on the road; the appliances are placed conveniently while there's plenty of open space for more gear.

The build quality and appearance of the body are both top notch, befitting of such a high quality touring build.

Pricing for the Oz Track Custom aluminium canopy starts at $21,850 and goes up from there depending on any extras or custom work you want for your set up. Being a relatively small company allows Ben and the team at Oz Track the flexibility to customise products to best suit the needs of customers, so it's best to give them a call to discuss exactly what you want and need. Jump on to their website to check out some of their amazing builds.



RATED

RRP: From **$21,850**

AVAILABLE FROM: www.oztrackcustom.com.au; (02) 6909 1694

WE SAY: A top quality lightweight yet tough service body that has been perfectly tailored to suit our requirements… and it looks great too.

OFF SIDE

Drivers side of the body has been kept open to carry bigger items. The MSA drawer and Custom Lithium battery are also on this side of the car

OUTBACK HELP

BREAKING DOWN IN THE BUSH CAN BECOME A CRISIS REAL FAST, BUT HAVING THE RIGHT ROADSIDE ASSISTANCE MIGHT BE YOUR SAVIOUR

WORDS AND PHOTOS **GLENN MARSHALL**

Embarking on a 4x4 adventure across Australia's vast landscapes is exhilarating, but the unpredictability of remote terrains underscores the necessity of a reliable roadside assistance package. Whether it's a dead battery at a bush campsite, an overheating engine on a remote track, or a snapped fan belt hundreds of kilometres from help, the right support can be the difference between a minor hiccup and a major ordeal.

Modern 4x4s are tough, but no vehicle is immune to mechanical failure, especially when pushed to the limit in rugged environments. And unlike the city, a breakdown in the bush doesn't come with the convenience of nearby service centres or fast tow trucks. This is where the right roadside assist package proves its worth – not just for peace of mind, but potentially for your safety and survival.

Choosing the right level of cover isn't just about ticking a box when you buy your vehicle or insurance; it's about ensuring you're protected wherever you travel, and no matter how far off the beaten track you roam.

BE PREPARED
Don_t leave home without top roadside assist

UNDERSTANDING ROADSIDE ASSISTANCE

For 4x4 owners, roadside assistance is often seen as a safety net, something you hope you never need but can't afford to go without. While many people assume it's mainly for city slickers with flat batteries or locked keys, the reality is very different when your vehicle is a fully loaded 4x4 heading deep into the bush.

At its core, roadside assistance is a support service designed to help drivers when their vehicle becomes inoperable. Typical services include towing, battery jump-starts, fuel delivery, lockout help and minor mechanical fixes. For urban drivers, basic packages often suffice. But for those who own a 4x4 and use it the way it was designed – off the bitumen and into remote or rugged country – the stakes are much higher. Breakdowns in the city can be inconvenient. Breakdowns in the bush can be dangerous.

Imagine you are days into a High Country trip and your alternator fails. Or you're crossing the Simpson Desert when your engine overheats. Out here, it's not just about waiting for a tow truck, it's about where that tow truck is coming from, how far it's willing to take you and what happens to you, your passengers and your gear in the meantime.

Many basic roadside assistance packages only cover towing for short distances – say 20km to 50km. That might get you to a mechanic in town, but it's useless if you're broken down 200km from anywhere. Some providers also limit coverage to sealed roads, meaning if you're stuck halfway along the Anne Beadell Highway or deep in the Pilbara, you're entirely on your own.

This is where understanding the fine print of your roadside assistance plan becomes crucial. If you're a 4x4 owner who loves touring, camping or off-grid travel, you need a service that goes beyond the basics. That means looking for packages that:

- Offer long-range or unlimited towing
- Provide emergency accommodation and alternative transport
- Cover caravans, trailers and even pets
- Include support in regional and remote areas
- Are person-based, not just vehicle-based, so you're covered no matter what 4x4 you're in

Another point many overlook is the importance of having multiple callouts each year with minimal exclusions. Some lower-tier plans restrict how often you can request assistance or impose extra charges for anything beyond one or two callouts. Others might not help recover your vehicle if it's off-road, even if it's a legally accessed 4x4 track.

As a 4x4 owner, you're more likely to encounter harsh terrain, long distances between towns and mechanical issues brought on by heavy loads, corrugations, water crossings or extreme temperatures. That makes robust roadside assistance not just a luxury, but a key piece of your touring toolkit.

The bottom line? If you're going to invest tens of thousands of dollars into your 4x4 build, gear and trips, don't skimp on your safety net. Make sure your roadside assistance is as adventure-ready as your rig.

M.I.A.
Where are the wheelnuts

IF YOU'RE A 4X4 OWNER WHO LOVES TOURING, CAMPING OR OFF-GRID TRAVEL, YOU NEED A SERVICE THAT GOES BEYOND THE BASICS

REMOTE
Your OEM vehicle roadside assist might not help you out here

LONG HAUL
Miles from anywhere, this recovery took a few days to sort out.

LEVELS OF ROADSIDE ASSISTANCE

Not all roadside assistance is created equal. For 4x4 owners, understanding the different tiers of coverage is vital, especially when you're venturing beyond city limits and into regions where help can be hours or even days away.

Most providers offer three main levels of cover: Basic, Premium and Ultimate/Total Care. The jump in service between these tiers is significant and the right choice can mean the difference between a quick recovery and being stuck for days in the bush.

BASIC ROADSIDE ASSISTANCE

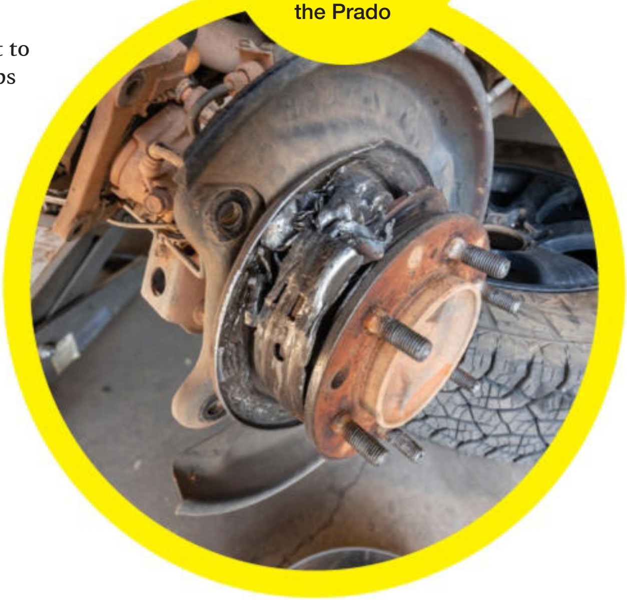
Best suited for: City drivers or those who rarely venture far from town.
This entry-level cover typically includes:

- Towing: Usually limited to 20-50km from the breakdown site
- Battery jump-starts
- Emergency fuel delivery (usually at your own cost)
- Tyre change support (if you have a usable spare)
- Lockout service (for when keys are locked inside the vehicle)

Limitations for four-wheel drivers:

- Coverage is often restricted to sealed roads or urban areas
- No support for trailers, caravans or off-road vehicles
- The towing distance is too short to reach the appropriate workshops from remote regions

VERDICT: Adequate for urban driving but unsuitable for 4x4 touring. You'll likely pay out of pocket if something goes wrong beyond the suburbs.



COOKED
Overheated brakes melted the axle bearings and stranded the Prado

PREMIUM ROADSIDE ASSISTANCE

Best suited for: Drivers who frequently travel regionally, occasionally take remote trips or tow a small van or camper.

PREMIUM PLANS BUILD ON THE BASICS AND USUALLY OFFER:

- Extended towing distances (typically 100km or more)
- Multiple callouts per year
- Emergency accommodation allowances (1-2 nights if you're stranded)
- Assistance for trailers or caravans (with some limitations)
- Coverage in regional areas (depending on provider)

Benefits for four-wheel drivers:

- Helps if you break down in a regional town or within a reasonable distance from one
- Some plans cover mechanical breakdowns in rural areas
- Can assist with recovery if your trailer is part of the trip

Limitations:

- May still exclude unsealed roads or remote tracks
- Recovery from off-road locations may incur extra charges or be excluded entirely
- Towing is still capped in distance – may not get you to a capital city for major repairs

VERDICT: A good compromise for four-wheel drivers who stick to the well-travelled routes, like the Great Ocean Road, Flinders Ranges or outback highways.

RACQ
Roadside Assistance
RACQ

REST EASY Driven to the accommodation organised by RACV

ULTIMATE OR TOTAL CARE ROADSIDE ASSISTANCE

Best suited for: Serious four-wheel drivers, remote travellers and anyone towing off-road campers or vans.

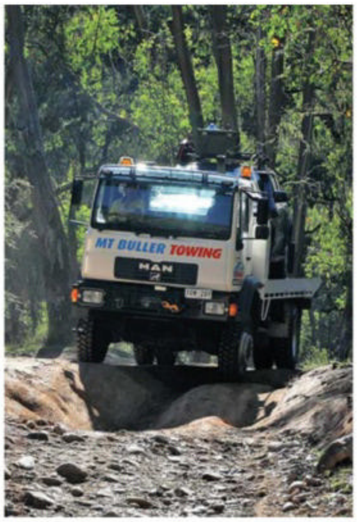
TOP-TIER ROADSIDE ASSISTANCE IS DESIGNED WITH REMOTE AND OFF-ROAD TOURING IN MIND. FEATURES INCLUDE:

- Unlimited or high-limit towing distances (often to your nearest repairer of choice)
- Emergency accommodation (up to four nights in some cases)
- Alternative transport options (hire cars, taxis or flights home)
- Coverage for trailers and caravans (sometimes even off-road recovery)
- Personal cover options – you're covered no matter which vehicle you're in
- Recovery from remote or unsealed roads, depending on the provider

BENEFITS FOR FOUR-WHEEL DRIVERS:

- You're covered almost anywhere, including far-flung destinations like Cape York, the Kimberley or Central Australia
- Can include recovery coordination for off-road breakdowns or vehicle extractions
- Often includes allowances for pets or dependents travelling with you

VERDICT: The gold standard for remote travel. If you're towing a van across the Savannah Way, tackling the Simpson Desert or exploring the far reaches of the Top End, this is the coverage you need.



YOU GET WHAT YOU PAY FOR

While the premium price tag of Ultimate or Total Care cover may seem steep – often $250 to $320 per year – it's a small price to pay compared to the cost of a 500km tow, emergency flights home or multiple nights of unplanned accommodation. In many cases, a single breakdown in the wrong place can result in thousands of dollars in expenses. With Total Care, that's all taken care of.

When you factor in your investment in your 4x4, touring setup and time on the road, spending more for reliable, all-inclusive coverage makes a lot of sense.

STATE AUTOMOBILE ASSOCIATIONS: OFFERINGS & PRICING

Provider	Plan	Annual Cost	Remote Towing	Benefits Value
NRMA (NSW/ACT)	Ultimate Care	$295	100km +	$4000
RACV (VIC)	Total Care	$315	100km	$2400
RACQ (QLD)	Ultra Care	$252	60km	$3300
RAA (SA)	Premium	$259	200km	$2000
RAC (WA)	Ultimate Plus	$365	300km	$7000
RACT (TAS)	Ultimate	$246	Unlimited*	$5000
AANT (NT)	Premium	$299	200km	$5500

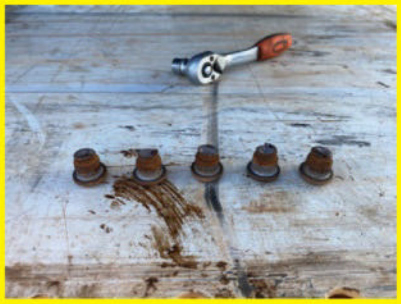
ANYTIME - ANY PLACE Another remote recovery for the Prado

CASE STUDY 1

Seventy-five kilometres west of Jupiter Well, on the Gary Junction Road, I stopped to take some photos of a stunning landscape. Upon returning to my 2006 Prado, I attempted to drive off, but it turned out to be difficult. The rear wheels were struggling to turn. In an instant, I knew what was wrong.

Earlier in the trip, the Prado was serviced in Darwin. The mechanic picked up that the handbrake wasn't working and, on closer inspection, discovered that the components had failed internally on the rear wheels. I'd asked that the components be removed from the drum as the handbrake wasn't needed on the 10,000km journey home.

With the wheels now protesting while driving, I was convinced that the mechanic hadn't followed my request. I finally reached Jupiter Well and pulled into the campground. Once stopped, it was clear that the rear wheels were extremely hot. The nut savers on the wheel nuts had melted, and the hubs were hot to the touch.



Once Starlink was set up, I called the RACV Total Care hotline and reported my issue to them. Within a couple of hours, the tow truck was on its way from Kulgera, 1220km away. The towing cost was $10,000, which RACV Total Care covered; however, because the cost was so high, they were unable to cover my accommodation upon reaching Alice Springs. If you refer back to the table above, you'll notice that $10,000 is over what the RACV Total Cover Benefits Value. All I can say is the RACV wasn't going to leave me stranded in such a remote place.

Within two days of the issue arising, the Prado was in the workshop at ARB Alice Springs. Two days after that, it was back on the road, having replaced the handbrake and brake rotor on one side and the entire hub and handbrake drum assembly with a secondhand one on the other.

OFF ROAD
ARB
4X4 ACCESSORIES
CAMPING

WHY 4X4 OWNERS SHOULD OPT FOR TOP-TIER COVERAGE

Owning a 4x4 opens up a world of exploration – remote beaches, outback deserts, alpine tracks and rugged bush trails most vehicles could never reach. But with that freedom comes responsibility. You're pushing your vehicle into environments that are harsh, unpredictable and often far from help. That's why settling for basic roadside assistance is a risk not worth taking.

Here's why top-tier roadside assist isn't just a nice-to-have for four-wheel drivers – it's essential.

> BASIC ROADSIDE ASSISTANCE OFTEN EXCLUDES UNSEALED ROADS, AND MANY MID-TIER PACKAGES WON'T COME TO YOUR RESCUE UNLESS YOU'RE CLOSE TO A MAJOR TOWN

1 REMOTE AREA COVERAGE IS A MUST

Basic roadside assistance often excludes unsealed roads, and many mid-tier packages won't come to your rescue unless you're close to a major town. But Australia's best 4x4 destinations – Cape York, the Kimberley, the Simpson Desert, the Canning Stock Route – are nowhere near those places.

Top-tier packages are the only ones that offer:

- Remote recovery coordination from rural and hard-to-access areas
- Towing over hundreds, sometimes thousands, of kilometres
- Access to services with specialised 4x4 recovery equipment

Without this, a breakdown could leave you stranded for days, relying on satellite communications to organise a costly private recovery that could easily exceed $5000.

CALL HELP
Do you have the means to call for help

TOW-PRO
Ensure your trailer is included as part of your roadside assist package

2 THEY COVER YOUR CARAVAN, CAMPER OR TRAILER TOO

Many 4x4 adventures involve towing, whether that's a camper trailer, off-road caravan or even a boat. If you're only covered for your vehicle, you might get a free tow, but your trailer is left behind or even worse it could cost you a small fortune to recover.

Top-tier cover often includes:

- Towing for caravans and trailers
- Emergency accommodation while your rig is being repaired
- Separate transport for your gear, pets and passengers

This is invaluable if you're halfway up the Gibb River Road and both your tow vehicle and trailer need to be relocated.

3 UNLIMITED OR HIGH-CAPACITY TOWING

Standard policies might get you 20km to 50km of towing – enough to reach the next mechanic in the suburbs – but if you break down 300km from the nearest town, that won't cut it.

TOP-TIER PLANS TYPICALLY OFFER:

- Unlimited towing to the nearest suitable repairer
- Optional towing to your preferred mechanic – even if it's back in your home city
- Multiple vehicle recovery if you're travelling in a convoy or with family

This ensures you're not left negotiating with local towies or being forced to fix your vehicle at a location you don't trust.

4 YOU'RE COVERED NO MATTER WHAT VEHICLE YOU'RE IN

With personal cover included in most premium plans, it doesn't matter whether you're in your own 4x4, driving your partner's rig or riding shotgun with a mate – you're still protected.

THAT FLEXIBILITY IS VITAL FOR:

- Group trips where drivers rotate
- Backup vehicles or support vehicles on long tours
- Hiring a 4x4 for interstate adventures

It's peace of mind, even when you're not behind the wheel.

Does your package cover Simpson Desert recoveries?

CASE STUDY 2

Upon reaching Birdsville after driving the Colson Track, Rig Road and WAA Line, I noticed a noise coming from the front driver's side wheel. Unfortunately, we couldn't work out where it was coming from, and nothing felt loose. The next day, we departed the Betoota Hotel and headed towards Innamincka via the Arrabury Road before parting ways with the rest of the convoy once we reached the Adventure Way.

Travelling solo, I drove towards Thargomindah, and having just overtaken a B-triple mining truck, I felt a sudden jerk of the steering wheel, so I guided the Prado onto the road shoulder and rolled to a stop. Upon exiting the vehicle, I instantly noticed the problem: the front wheel was jammed under the upper control arm, and the wheel studs had sheared off.

It was Starlink and RACV Total Care to the rescue again. I was 250km west of Thargomindah when the lone tow truck passed me, carrying a broken camper trailer as I talked to the RACV. By 9pm, the Prado was on the back of the tow truck. The legendary driver had chosen to come and pick me up tonight instead of tomorrow morning.

Just after midnight, it was parked in front of a cabin at the Explorers Caravan Park. By late afternoon, the Prado was fixed; thankfully, the small Toyota dealer in town had spare studs. I was able to head home the next morning, grateful that my choice to pay for the top-tier coverage with RACV meant I wasn't out of pocket for the tow or two nights' accommodation.

5 ADDED PERKS: ACCOMMODATION, FLIGHTS, HIRE CARS AND MORE

Breaking down in the bush is one thing, getting back to your life is another. If your vehicle is going to be off the road for days or weeks, you're going to need more than a tow.

TOP-TIER PACKAGES OFFER:

- Emergency accommodation – up to 4-5 nights, depending on the provider
- Vehicle repatriation – they'll organise transport for your 4x4 once it's fixed
- Flights or hire car options – so you can continue your trip or get home
- Transport for pets, trailers and even gear

This turns a potential holiday-ending disaster into a manageable detour.

FINAL WORD

When you head off the beaten track, preparation is everything. You carry recovery gear, spare parts, a first aid kit, extra water and sometimes even satellite communications – because when you're far from civilisation, self-reliance becomes essential. But even the best-laid plans can unravel. That's when roadside assistance becomes your safety net.

And not just any roadside assistance.

Top-tier coverage is designed with the realities of remote travel in mind. It's built for the long-haul tourer who might break down 300km from the nearest town. It's made for the off-roader towing a heavy camper up the Cape or through the Kimberley. It's for the family taking the road trip of a lifetime, who need a plan B that doesn't end in stress, danger or a massive bill.

Basic and midrange plans are not built for this level of adventure. They're fine for the suburbs and the occasional country road, but they fall apart when faced with the real challenges of outback touring: huge distances, limited infrastructure and the complete absence of mobile reception.

Top-tier packages don't just offer towing – they offer recovery coordination, emergency accommodation, transport for passengers, pets and trailers, and even repatriation of your vehicle if needed. Most importantly, they give you peace of mind that if something does go wrong out there, help will come, and your journey doesn't have to end at the side of a dusty track.

For four-wheel drivers who invest in quality gear, capable vehicles and unforgettable trips, upgrading your roadside assistance should be a no-brainer. It's one of the most important tools in your touring kit, something you hope you never use, but for which you will be incredibly grateful if you do.

So, before your next big adventure, check your coverage. Read the fine print. Ask the tough questions. Then upgrade to a plan that's as serious about exploring Australia as you are.

Because out there, the right roadside assist isn't just handy, it's your lifeline.

6 IT'S A SMALL PRICE TO PAY FOR SERIOUS PROTECTION

The average Total Care package costs between $250 and $320 per year, which is often less than the price of a single tank of diesel in a long-range 4x4 vehicle. In return you receive:

- Coverage anywhere you go
- Support when things go wrong
- Confidence to travel further without fear

Considering a single outback recovery can cost thousands, and a commercial tow from the NT to Adelaide can hit more than $10,000, the investment in top-tier cover pays for itself many times over if you ever need to use it.

REST ASSURED There's a wide brown land out there to explore, just be sure you're covered when things go wrong.

RACING PEDIGREE

J.D. PUTS THE MICKEY THOMPSON BAJA BOSS TO THE TEST

WORDS AND PHOTOS JOHN DENMAN

Anyone who has spent any time at all involved in recreational four-wheel driving will have come across the name Mickey Thompson. He made his name in Off Road racing; back in the early days of desert racing in Baja, California. It was this racing that instigated Mickey's search for the ideal rubber, and when he couldn't find a suitable commercially available tyre, he decided to go and make his own… as you do.

Being heavily influenced by his Baja racing, most of the tyres he produced used that name in one form or another, and his Baja Claws proved a big success in desert racing. It wasn't long before he decided to get into the 4x4 consumer market and the rest, as they say, is history.

The tyres we have fitted to our Ranger also bear the name Baja, but they are not the old Claws. No, these tyres are called Baja Boss A/T, and with their pronounced side-biters

they certainly look the part when it comes to recreational four-wheel driving. Mickey Thompson pioneered the side-biter design, and it has since been employed by a number of other tyre makers.

We fitted the Baja Boss A/T rubber to the Ranger about 10,000km ago, and while Mickey Thompson says it is an all-terrain, to most people it looks pretty close to a mud-terrain pattern thanks to its well defined lugs. But you have to remember we are talking about Mickey Thompson here, and he has always favoured the aggressive look. Notably, these tyres are still made in the USA, and the size chosen for our Ranger is LT265/65R17.

I expected a bit of road noise as soon as I drove out of the fitting bay but it was not particularly noticeable, so I began to wonder if the pressures were a bit high. I checked them, and all four were set at 36psi. Normally you might expect to run these tyres at around 40psi in a vehicle like the Ranger, and as mine is driven pretty much loaded up all the time, I thought that lower pressure was a bit surprising, despite the three-ply rating of the sidewalls.

Mickey Thompson dealer Plateau Tyres at Alstonville Northern NSW supplied and fitted the tyres, and also placed a sticker on the windscreen to remind us to rotate them at 10,000km, which we did. We also checked the tread depth at that point, and from the original tread depth of 14mm to 15mm had worn down to 9.8mm to 12.6mm respectively. These numbers represent a sampling from different locations on the tyre, and show a wear over 10,000km of 4mm to 0.23mm.

> I'M TOLD THAT WITH THE RIGHT TREATMENT, TYRE WEAR SHOULD SEE THEM LAST TO AROUND 85,000KM. WE'LL BE DOING OUR BEST TO TRY AND MAKE THAT HAPPEN

The Mickey Ts have stood up to towing a 2.5t van and travelling over a wide variety of surfaces, including outback tracks. As we live in a rural area, tyres are always going to cop a bit of a flogging. So far they've shown no signs of any damage, and they have maintained pressure well. On some rural properties we go to they have handled muddy tracks without drama. On wet bitumen there has been no sign of loss of traction, no doubt thanks to the presence of deep sipes on the lugs to help disperse water.

So far it's difficult to find anything to be critical about these tyres. They are not cheap, but then you expect to pay a good price for a decent product. I'll admit that 10,000km is really just the beginning, but they are showing great promise and I'm told that with the right treatment, tyre wear should see them last to around 85,000km. We'll be doing our best to try and make that happen.

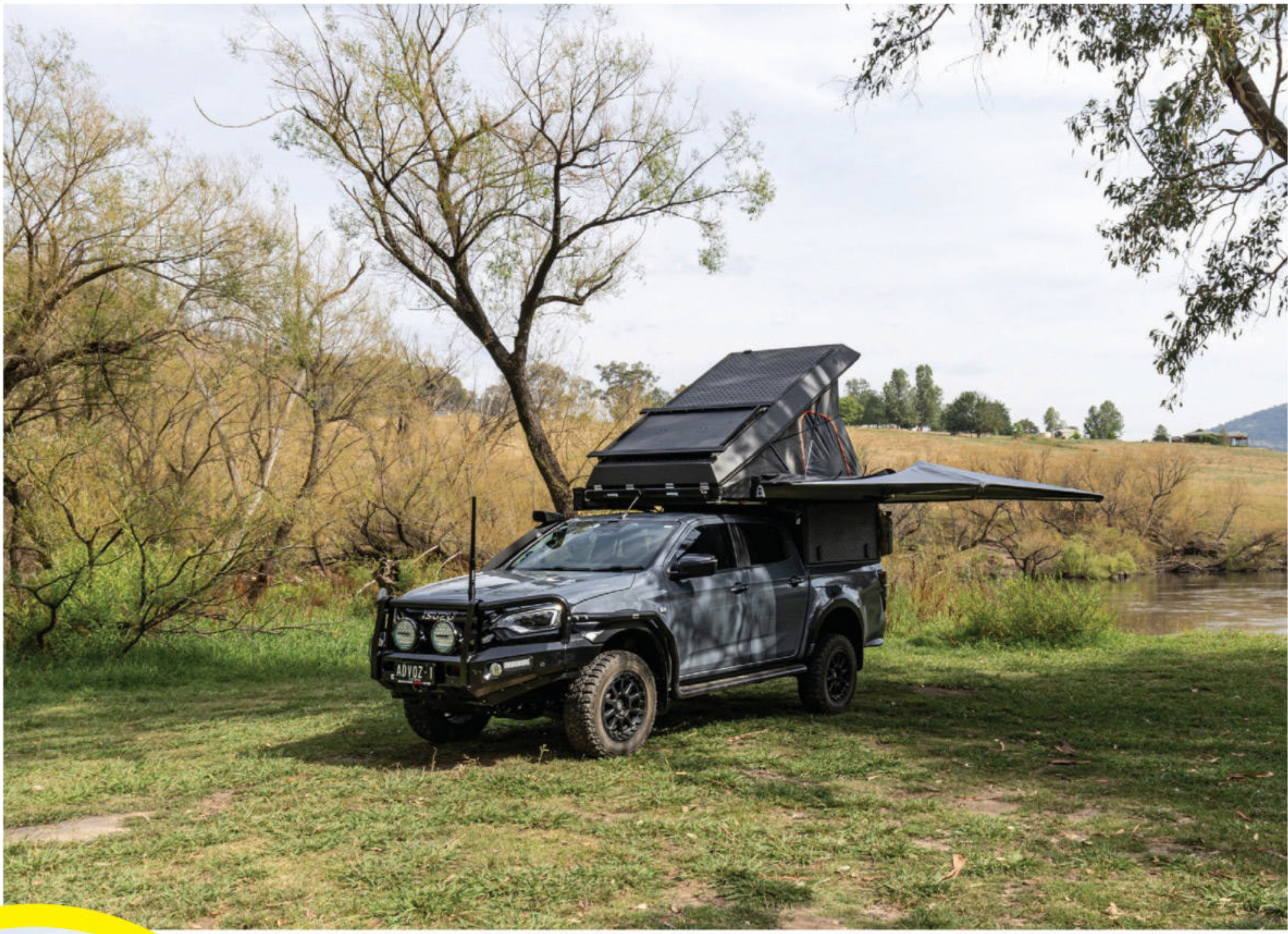
RATED

RRP: $450-$480 each

AVAILABLE FROM:
www.mickeythompsontires.com.au

WE SAY: A premium all-terrain with an aggressive tread pattern that has shown great promise in the first 10,000km.

The Mickey Ts have stood up to towing a 2.5t van anover a wide variety of surfaces.



QUICK CAMP

PULL UP, POP THE ROOF AND CRACK A COLD ONE, THE ALU-CAB CANOPY CAMPER DOES THE HARD WORK FOR YOU

WORDS AND PHOTOS **GLENN MARSHAL**

I have clocked up more outback kilometres than I can count and I've tried every type of touring setup, from rooftop tents to camper trailers to caravans. I didn't want to buy a ute and swap the tub for a tray with an overweight and ineffective canopy, so I opted for the Alu-Cab Canopy Camper, and it has changed how I camp. In fact, I reckon it has genuinely shifted the game for ute-based touring in Australia.

Born in South Africa, the Canopy Camper has made its mark here for a straightforward reason: it works. It's fast to set up, tough enough for serious tracks and gives the flexibility to go further without dragging a trailer behind. After a couple of months of using it on the road, I can safely say it's one of the most efficient and enjoyable touring setups I've used.

WHAT IS THE ALU-CAB CANOPY CAMPER?

The Canopy Camper is a fusion of three concepts: a ute canopy, a rooftop tent and a compact camper body. It's a pop-top, aluminium camper shell that fits most dual-cab, extra-cab, and single-cab ute tubs. The roof lifts with gas struts to reveal an integrated sleeping platform and mattress, while the rear door opens into a walk-in interior with full standing room.

The structure is made from powder-coated aluminium and is lightweight, tipping the scales at only 240kg with the spare tyre fitted. It is also incredibly strong and built to handle the worst corrugations and dust the outback can throw at you. It's properly sealed, secure and weather-resistant. Think of it as a touring pod that turns your ute tub into a fully self-contained travel rig.

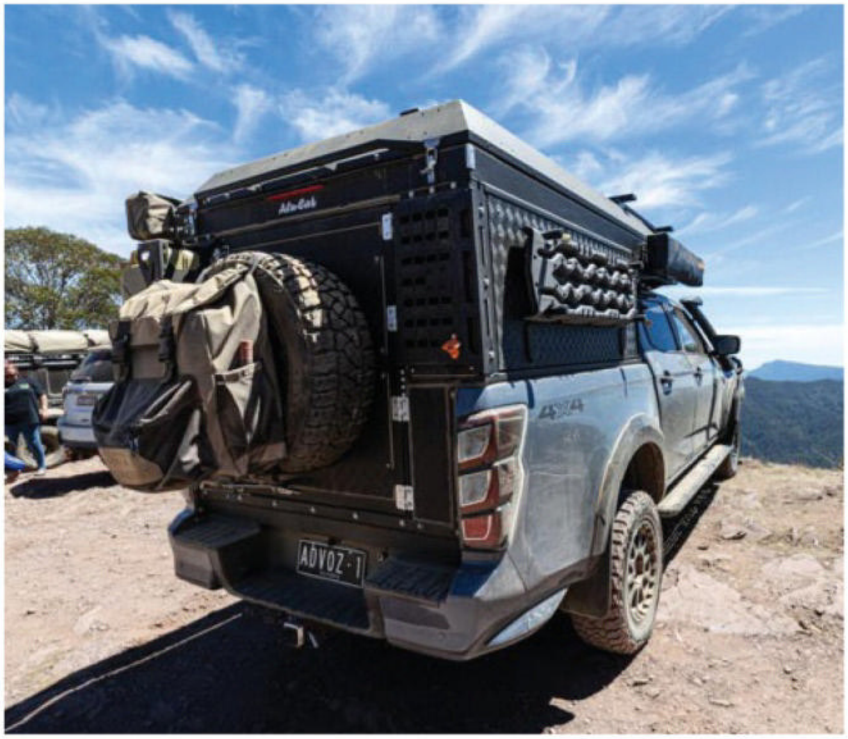
The Canopy Camper comes pre-wired, which is very handy and tidy. Protected in corrugated tubing, there's wiring for the solar input on the roof of the camper, the five cabin lights, two stalk lights in the tent, and 12v power and USB ports in the tent.

LIGHT UP
LED lighting is featured inside the canopy

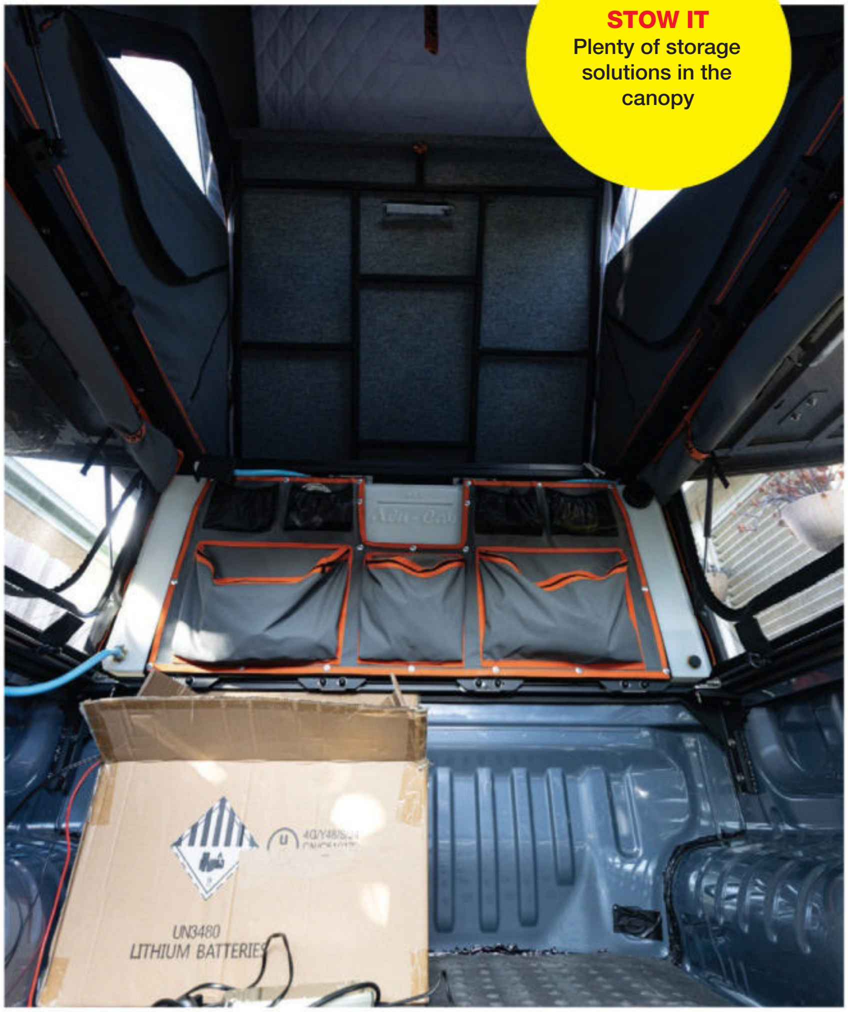
WHY I CHOSE THE ALU-CAB CANOPY CAMPER

Like many other adventurers, I juggled multiple systems depending on the trip – a rooftop tent for short stints and a camper trailer for extended stays, but the constant packing, setting up and trailer drama were getting old fast. I wanted something more streamlined, reliable and capable of keeping up with remote solo travel.

That's when I started looking at the Alu-Cab Canopy Camper. It offered a promise of simplicity – no towball, no poles, no canvas bag fights in the dark – just a lightweight, hard-wearing, all-in-one camper that bolts straight to the back of my D-Max. More importantly, it provides an internal habitat to escape inclement weather and pesky flies.



I CAN'T OVERSTATE HOW GOOD IT FEELS TO PULL UP TO CAMP AND BE SET UP IN LESS THAN 60 SECONDS.



STOW IT
Plenty of storage solutions in the canopy

WAS IT EASY TO INSTALL?

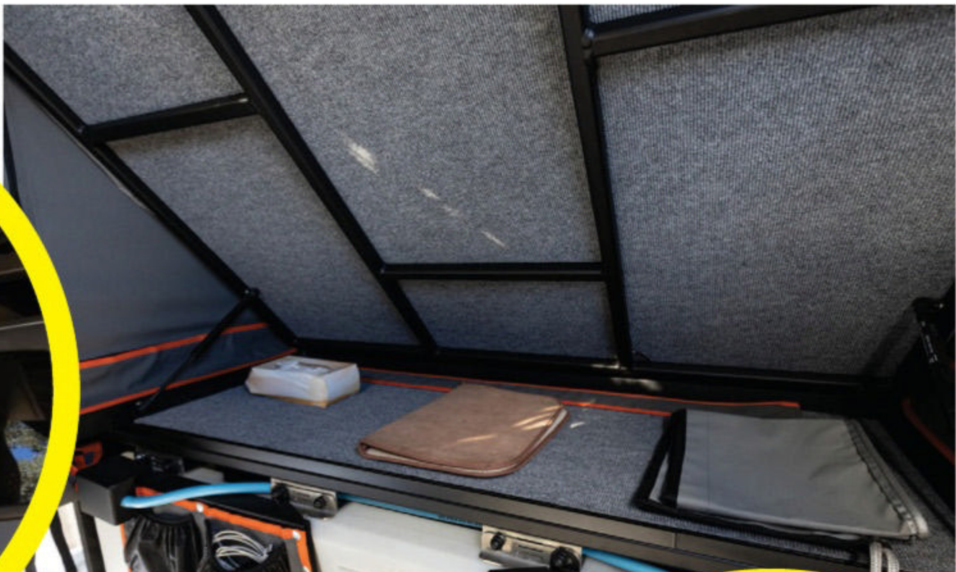
The guys at Get Off Road 4x4 here in Wodonga installed the Alu-Cab Canopy Camper Deluxe on my D-Max, which I dropped off to them on the day I picked it up Isuzu with just 10km on the clock.

The first step was to remove the roof rails, sports bar, hard tonneau cover and tailgate before cleaning the surfaces and preparing them for Sikaflex. Watching the camper swinging from a forklift as it was slowly lowered into place was nerve-racking. The team at Get Off Road 4x4 then spent the next three days bolting the unit to the tub, installing the vehicle-specific infill plates on the rear, the 50L water tank, 270° Shadow Awning and the Shower Cube before sealing the gaps with Sikaflex.

Sealing the tub from dust and water ingress was more extensive than anticipated. Since each brand and model of 4x4 tub is different, identifying all the holes can be difficult. Even a smoke bomb didn't reveal all the tiny holes that let dust in. It has taken me three tubes of Sikaflex to seal the tub thoroughly, so I'm confident it is dust-free and waterproof. Another critical point is the tub and Canopy Camper flex, so if a seal is defective, it might crack or split, allowing dust to penetrate, so I still carry a small tube of Sikaflex with me… just in case.

TOP 5 MODS FOR THE ALU-CAB CANOPY CAMPER

1. 50L water tank: Allows me to stay off-grid for longer
2. Alu-Cab ModCap Kitchen: The perfect modular kitchen with everything available, just add the stove
3. Rear Door Midgee Screen: Keeps the bugs out while increasing the airflow by keeping the rear door open
4. Canopy Camper Table Slide & Alu Table: Perfect storage for a simple-to-set-up aluminium table
5. Spare Wheel Holder: Holds up to a 33-inch wheel and tyre, freeing up space under the tub

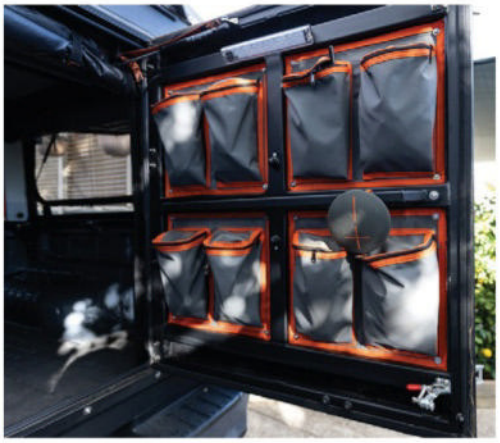


SET UP IN LESS THAN A MINUTE

I can't overstate how good it feels to pull up to camp and be set up in less than 60 seconds. No lie – I park and level up the D-Max, open the rear door, unlatch the roof, and give it a push, climb inside and lift the bed. I then fold out the Alu-Cab Shadow Awning and I'm done – no ropes, pegs or climbing a ladder with a torch between my teeth.

The bedding stays in place, the mattress stays dry and I'm off the ground and out of the weather. If the skies are angry or it's late and I'm wrecked, I can still be in bed before the billy boils.

In the morning, pack-down is just as easy – I leave my sleeping bag in place, close the roof, latch it shut, close the awning and I'm back on the road.



READY
The bedding remains inplace ready for a quick nap anytime

BUILT FOR AUSTRALIAN CONDITIONS

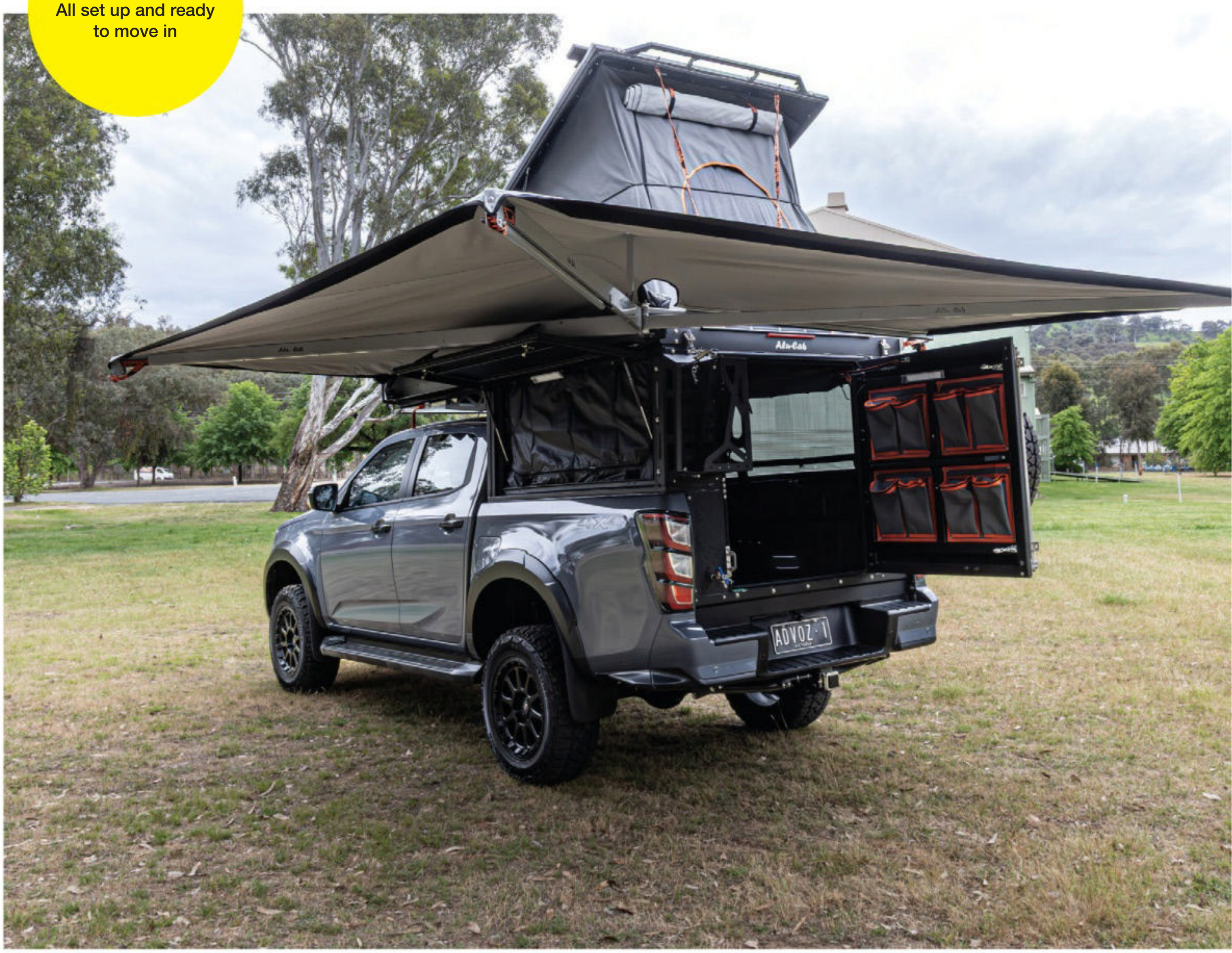
The more time I spend with the Canopy Camper the more impressed I am with its resilience. It handles the heat in the Top End, the cold of the High Country and the dust of the outback… like a pro. The roof is insulated, the seals are solid and the powder-coated finish shrugs off chips and scratches.

The tried-and-tested ripstop canvas tent offers durability and protection from the elements. It combines a robust canvas material with a reliable waterproof layer, providing a comfortable and secure environment. Whether you're setting up in rainy conditions or hot sunny weather, this tent is designed to meet your needs and offer an enjoyable outdoor experience.

The fact that everything is contained within the tub footprint means I retain full off-road capability. No trailer means I can reverse the D-Max down tight tracks, drive over soft sand without sinking and climb rutted hills without a second thought.

NO TRAILER MEANS I CAN REVERSE DOWN TIGHT TRACKS, DRIVE OVER SOFT SAND WITHOUT SINKING AND CLIMB RUTTED HILLS

COMPLETE
All set up and ready to move in



A CUSTOMISABLE CAMPER FOR REAL TOURING

One of the Alu-Cab Canopy Camper's greatest strengths is its modularity and lightness. You're not locked into a set design. The interior is a blank canvas, ready for you to kit out however you like. The basic shell's starting weight is a mere 210kg. There is a difference between the base model and the Deluxe model.

DELUXE:

- Internal storage bags on the tent roof
- Power: Internal USB and Type-C power points
- Lighting: Internal lighting (5x National Luna dual colour lights, white/red)
- Wiring for solar panels
- Canvas mesh bags on the rear internal panels
- Canvas bags on the rear door
- 2 x Molle Plates on the rear externally
- 270° Shadow Awning and Awning deflector fitted
- Midgee nets on the side doors
- Fitment Kit

TENT STRUCTURE & MATERIALS:

- Fabric: Double-layer 400gsm UV-resistant ripstop canvas with sealed seams
- Rooftop Load Rating: 50kg

SHADOW AWNING STRUCTURE & MATERIALS:

- 2600mm length when closed, weighs 24kg
- 270° self-supported awning provides 10sqm of shade
- 315gsm 100% polyester base cloth impregnated with an acrylic-based resin
- Reflective ripstop material, the awning casts a noticeably lower shade temperature
- Four heavy-duty aluminium arms
- A single leg is available for windy conditions, and four tie-down ropes are integrated into each arm
- Extra legs, storm kit and awning walls can be purchased separately

INTERIOR & COMFORT:

- Mattress Material: 70mm high-density foam with a zip-off cover, to which I added a condensation mat underneath and a mattress topper to suit my preferences
- Canopy Access: 3-point access with gas strut supported lift-up side doors and full vertical rear door
- Tent Access: 3-point external access, one internal access point
- Tent Insulation: Top and bottom foam insulation

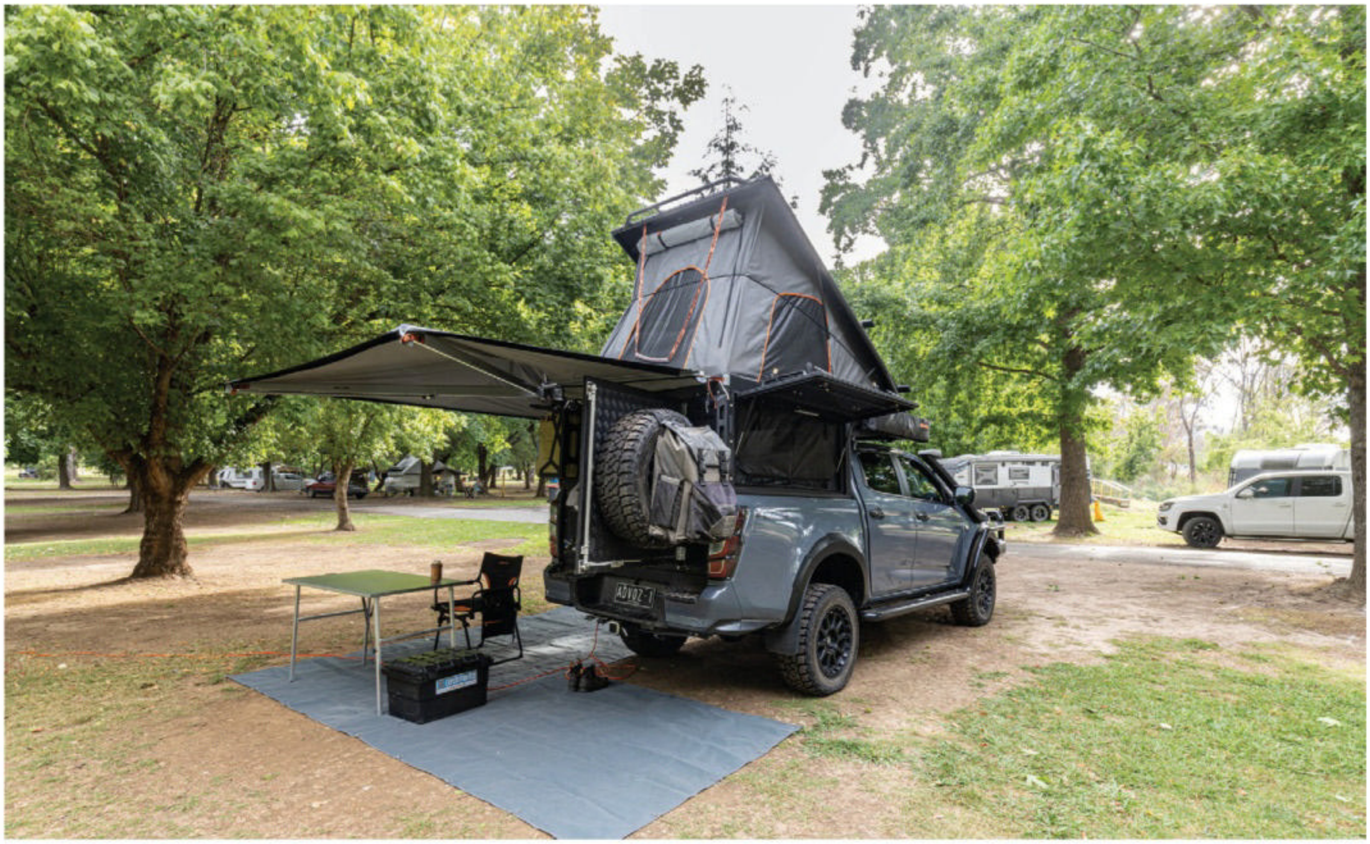
TO THE DELUXE MODEL, I ADDED:

- Spare wheel bracket for the rear door
- 50L food grade UV stabilised LLDPE water tank and canvas pocket kit (includes breather assembly and outlet fittings with a lockable tap)
- Canopy Camper Table Slide and Alu Table
- Midgee net for the rear door
- Alu-Cab Shower Cube
- Jerry can holder
- Shadow Awn Gutter Kit
- Roof Rack Tray
- Push Button Lock Covers
- Get Good Gear Molle panel on a side door
- Razed Products Flush Mounting Kit for TRED Pros

Stage Two of the build will include fitting out the internal space with Goose Gear Modular Cabinetry, a Projecta Power Management System and battery, Projecta solar fixed solar panels, Duoetto 10L hot water, an EGON Water Hub, an Alu-Cab ModCAP Kitchen and a Travel Buddy.

This setup will give me enough to stay off-grid for a week and to move quickly between camps without having to rely on caravan parks or powered sites.

READY
TREDS are secured outside ready for use



HOW IT'S CHANGED THE WAY I TRAVEL

Before fitting the Canopy Camper, I debated whether to take the camper trailer or deal with the rooftop tent. Trips were slower, setup was a chore and I often avoided specific routes because I didn't want the hassle. If the weather was bad or the flies were annoying, I was stuck outside with no respite.

Now I can travel lighter, further and more confidently. I no longer plan trips around campsites or trailer-friendly tracks. I go where I want, from remote desert tracks to high country ridgelines, and I know that camp is only a minute away at day's end.

At camp, I know I can escape bad weather inside the Canopy Camper, with the insect screens covering the sides and rear door to prevent bugs from entering. I can even drop the access panel for the bed and use it as a workspace. At night, I'm safe knowing I can lock the rear door internally so that no one can open it from the outside, nor can they lock me in.

There's also a psychological shift: the simplicity makes touring more enjoyable, there is less gear to manage and fewer things to worry about. Everything has a place. Everything works.

FINAL THOUGHTS

The Alu-Cab Canopy Camper isn't cheap… and it's not for everyone. But if you're serious about touring, value your time and you want a setup that works hard without compromise, it's one of the best investments you can make. It also makes more efficient use of the rear of your ute, unlike a tray with a canopy.

It's taken the stress out of travel and made the road feel more like home. Whether chasing red dirt tracks or winding through rainforest trails, I know I've got a reliable, comfortable and capable setup that can go the distance.

RATED

RRP: From **$25,000**

AVAILABLE FROM: www.alu-cab.com/

WE SAY: Lightweight, functional, adaptable, simple to use… and that's how touring should be

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DRIVING LIGHTS | LIGHT BARS | WORKLIGHTS | GLOBES | INSPECTION LAMPS | HEADLIGHTS | WIRING KITS

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Kareela Engineering 2 Tamar Court, Mentone VIC 3194 email: john.endlessair@gmail.com

THIS MONTH WE TALK TO

TERRAIN TAMER

Describe your business

Terrain Tamer is a range of 4WD Parts, manufactured by Original Equipment Manufacturers to be stronger than the original or easier to instal as a kit or assembled unit.

Suspension, Brake, Filtration, Bearing Kits, Clutch, Driveline are all designed and manufactured to be stronger, safer, and last longer. Our Head Office in Melbourne is significant in size and holds over 60,000 lines on the shelf.

Tell us some of the history of the company

Established in 1969, our parts were originally designed to help the tour operators who took tour groups into outback Australia using Bedford, Leyland and Land Rover vehicles. As they broke down, which was incredibly dangerous, they would come to see Frank, our founder, who would modify parts or source stronger parts from overseas. In the 1970s we moved into LandCruiser and HiLux vehicle applications, and now across the many popular 4WD applications such as Ford Ranger, Nissan Navara and Patrol, Isuzu D-MAX and Mazda BT-50. Gradually, part by part, 55 years later, Terrain Tamer is sought after all over the world for these innovations.

TERRAIN TAMER
HEAVY DUTY
BEARING KIT

Where is the company now at

It has been an incredible journey, as we have taken our range to key markets globally over the last 40 years. Almost half our branches are now overseas in Europe, Africa, South America, NZ, PNG, Fiji, and we are very excited to now say North America.

The release of innovative parts has not slowed down, with over 2000 lines released in the last 12 months. Some of these have won innovation awards and some are relied on by Australia's largest companies, such as BHP.

What is unique about your product

We would humbly suggest that Terrain Tamer is the only true 4WD parts specialist in the world. Not accessories like bullbars, but 4WD parts that run the vehicle. We say this because we control the design, the manufacture and the distribution of the Terrain Tamer range.

Then there is the incredibly important skill of Parts Interpreting that completes each transaction. All these key aspects have taken us 55 years to create and ultimately generate a very different customer experience, compared to a general parts trader, who simply buys and sells.

If you could say two words about your product / service what would it be

Personally responsible.

What makes you different from your competition

Our 4WD Test Track at Head Office symbolises our difference. No other company in the world has such a facility that we know of, which is a lot of fun and important to what we do and develop. It is part of the investment it takes to be the world leader, that the brand is today.

What products are you developing now

We've got GVM Upgrade applications rolling out, and many applications for the USA market; plus some interesting heavy-duty radiators, upgraded brake solutions, fortified shock absorbers and parabolic spring applications.

Who uses your products

Those who appreciate the difference.

What is your greatest achievement

We're pretty proud of having 27 staff with over 25 years' service to the company. That is out of a team of 200.

The company has always looked to hire from within, rather than dropping outside managers into a leadership role. This takes time and some would say is limiting, but we have found it an incredibly enjoyable ride, as these people grow with the company.

"We grow through our people."

The Australian Automotive 4x4 market has a rich and proud heritage. For years local design, ingenuity and showcase and support truly Australian engineered and manufactured products. There are a few aussie manufacturers

SO SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL

TERRAIN TAMER
SEATS
AUSTRALIAN MADE FOR COMFORT

TERRAIN TAMER 4WD
When Quality Counts

TERRAIN TAMER
SEAT BELT KITS
MADE IN AUSTRALIA

TERRAIN TAMER 4WD
When Quality Counts

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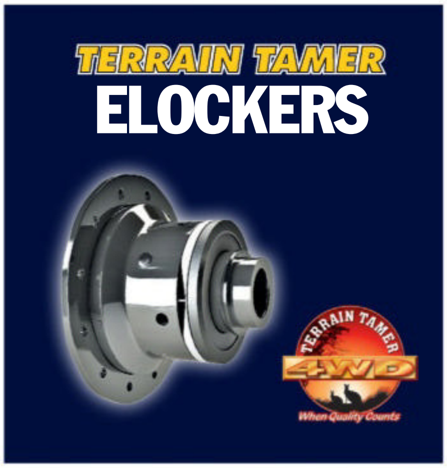
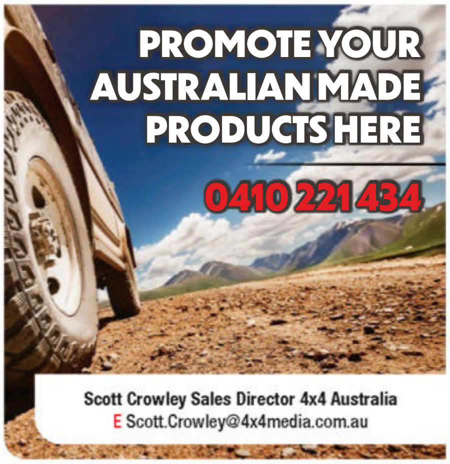
TERRAIN TAMER
MOULDED FLOOR MATS

TERRAIN TAMER 4WD
When Quality Counts



TERRAIN TAMER
ELOCKERS

TERRAIN TAMER 4WD
When Quality Counts



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manufacturing have created many fantastic four-wheel drive related products. At *4X4 Australia* we are proud to keeping the dream alive, helping to keep the local manufacturing industry thriving and keeping people in real jobs.

AUSSIE-MADE PRODUCTS.

GEAR

PRODUCT TESTS & NEW STUFF

SCOTCHLINE SIGNS VEHICLE WRAPS

With more than 35 years in the game, Melbourne-based Scotchline Signs delivers high-quality signage and vehicle wraps for everything from single cars to full fleets. Services include custom graphics, decals, lettering, and illuminated signs, backed by design advice and full project management. Want proof? Check out the wraps on our latest project rigs.

RRP: Prices vary

WEBSITE: www.scotchline.com.au

DIRTY LIFE DT-2 DUAL-TEK WHEEL

The Dirty Life DT-2 Dual-Tek is a 17-inch wheel built for off-road use. It's nine inches wide with a -12 offset, designed to fit vehicles with a 5 x 127 bolt pattern and a 71.6mm hub. Made from heavy-duty aluminium, it can handle loads up to 1542kg, making it strong enough for rough tracks and heavy gear. The wheel features a rugged design with 10 concave spokes and a simulated beadlock ring for extra toughness and style. It comes in four finishes so you can match your rig's look.

RRP: From $390 each (approx.)

WEBSITE: dynamicwheelco.com.au

MSA POWER FOLD TOWING MIRRORS LC300 GX

Designed specifically for the 300 Series LandCruiser GX (07/2021-current), these ADR-compliant mirrors feature a large single lens for a clear view, four adjustable positions and both vertical and horizontal movement. The mirrors extend when towing and return to a standard position when not in use. Built to handle Australian conditions, they're made with injection-moulded and die-cast aluminium components and include electric adjustment, indicators and power fold functionality. The pivot system allows the mirrors to fold inwards or outwards if bumped. They mount directly in place of the factory mirrors, retaining most original functions. Backed by a five-year warranty.

RRP: $1725

WEBSITE: msa4x4.com.au

EFS VIVIDMAX LIGHT BAR

This rugged, high-performance LED light bar is designed for off-road use. Available in 12-, 21-, 32- and 40-inch sizes, each combines powerful Cree XP-P and HFL3 LEDs to deliver a focused, clear beam with a colour temperature between 5700K and 6500K. Features include extruded 6063 aluminum housing, UV-treated impact-resistant lenses, white and amber daytime running light (DRL), durable mounting options and Deutsch connectors. The lights are IP67 rated, operate from -40°C to 65°C, and have passed rigorous corrosion and salt spray tests. They operate on 12-48 volts and boast a 50,000-hour lifespan. Wiring harnesses are available separately

RRP: $206 to $464

WEBSITE: efs4wd.com.au

IRONMAN 4X4 DRAWERS FOR MU-X

These roller drawers for the Isuzu MU-X (2021+) are a lightweight, modular storage solution constructed from a mix of 6051-T5 and die-cast aluminium. The system is claimed to be 20-25 per cent lighter than traditional set-ups, starting at just 18kg for a single mid-height drawer. Features include a patented roller-bearing slide system with a lock-out mechanism to hold drawers open on inclines, integrated LED strip lighting, full lockability, and T-Slot channels for securing items like fridges and storage boxes. The top surfaces use Australian-made UV-stable slip-resistant carpet to reduce gear movement. Full-height drawers support 120kg each (240kg combined), and the roller-top can handle up to 100kg when extended.

RRP: TBA
WEBSITE: hwww.ironman4x4.com.au

EVAKOOL PLATINUM 40L DRAWER FRIDGE FREEZER

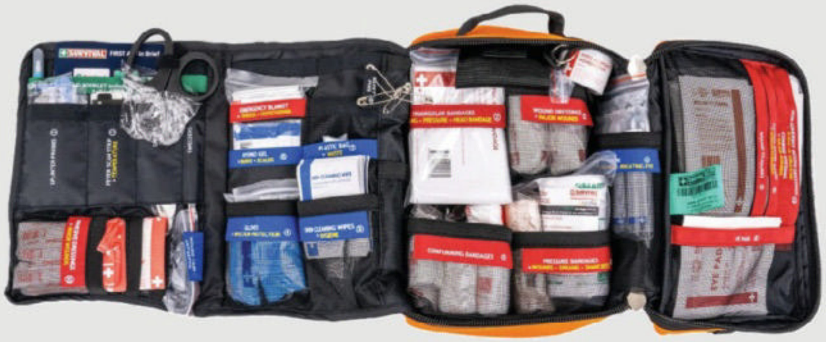
This fridge/freezer drawer unit can hold up to 48 cans. It uses a proven SECOP PBC 2.5 compressor and runs on 12/24V DC, with a temperature range from +10°C to -18°C. A clear acrylic lid provides visibility, and the removable tub makes cleaning straightforward. It has internal LED lighting and a simple LED control panel for temperature adjustment. Built in Australia, it features a tough metal cabinet, fully insulated body and a heavy-duty floor bracket for secure mounting. External dimensions are 836mm x 595mm x 326mm (LxWxH), and it weighs 28kg. Warranty is five years.

RRP: $1100
WEBSITE: evakool.com.au

MAXTRAX ADVENTURER FIRST AID KIT

This first-aid kit is designed for outdoor use, making it ideal for 4x4 trips, hiking, camping and other off-grid adventures. It features a durable, water-resistant bag with high-strength zippers and luminous piping, and it includes CPR instructions and a first-aid booklet to support emergency response. Inside, you'll find more than 100 components including adhesive dressings, bandages, antiseptic wipes, a resuscitation shield, sterile wound pads, an emergency blanket, gloves, splinter probes and a CPR kit. It also comes with tools like stainless steel tweezers, bandage shears and a notepad with pencil.

RRP: $179
WEBSITE: maxtrax.com.au



MAXTRAX
FIRST AID KIT
ADVENTURER

ZEON LTZ PRO
RACELINE
COOPER

COOPER LTZ PRO

The Cooper LTZ Pro is a hybrid all-terrain tyre that combines off-road capability with stable on-road handling. It features a five-rib tread pattern for balance, a tough carcass with strong steel belts for load support and impact resistance, and a silica-based compound for improved wet-weather grip and fuel efficiency. Design elements like enhanced buttresses, saw tooth edges, dual 'Z' sipes and centre tie bars offer added traction, wear resistance and directional stability across varied terrain. It is covered by a includes a 50,000km warranty.

RRP: From $399 each (approx.)
WEBSITE: coopertires.com.au

TERRAIN TAMER

TERRAIN TAMER SUSPENSION SEATS

These ADR-approved pews are designed to improve comfort for four-wheel drivers travelling long distances over rough, corrugated roads. Developed to complement Terrain Tamer's parabolic leaf springs, the seats feature an adjustable light-truck suspension system and a precise recliner function, delivering a smooth, comfortable ride in tough conditions. The seats include ergonomic Enduro foam, Sisiara matting for impact reduction and pronounced side bolsters for added support. Designed for LandCruiser 70/80/100 Series, installation requires engineering sign-off.

RRP: $3800 approx. (each, without fitting kits)
WEBSITE: www.terraintamer.com

TOUGH DOG TD-R PRO SHOCKS

Tough Dog's new TD-R Pro Series remote reservoir shock absorbers are built for demanding off-road conditions, offering reliable performance and control. With eight-stage adjustable rebound and compression, the TD-R Pro Series allows for precise tuning to suit different terrains and loads. The shocks feature a durable monotube body and a high-capacity remote canister, and are available for a wide range of 4x4s. The design focuses on consistent performance under sustained use, making it well suited to heavy-duty touring, towing and off-road driving.

RRP: Vehicle specific
WEBSITE: www.toughdog.com.au

UTEMASTER CENTURION CANOPY

Constructed from a strong aluminium frame, this canopy is designed to withstand heavy use and rough conditions. It features full-width rear doors, making it easier to load and unload gear, and a secure locking system that helps protect belongings from theft. Weather-resistant seals around the doors keep dust and water out, ensuring cargo stays dry and clean no matter the conditions. Finished with a practical, clean design, the Centurion Canopy offers durability without unnecessary extras. It's covered by a five-year warranty.

RRP: $8692 + GST

WEBSITE: www.utemaster.com.au

MIVUE TRUE 4K PRO SURROUND DASH CAM

The MiVue True 4K PRO Surround is a dash camera system made up of three cameras housed in two separate units, providing full coverage of the front, rear, sides and interior of the vehicle. The front-facing camera records in 4K Ultra HD using an eight-megapixel sensor, capturing detailed footage of the road ahead, including critical details like number plates and road signs. The second unit contains both the rear-facing camera and an interior-facing camera. The rear camera records activity behind the vehicle, while the interior camera has a wide 170-degree field of view, capturing side impact zones that are often missed by traditional dash cams.

RRP: $529

WEBSITE: www.navman.com.au

READERS RIGS

WANT TO SEE YOUR 4x4 PUBLISHED IN THE MAG? SEND US A PIC VIA OUR FACEBOOK PAGE!

DANIEL HANNON

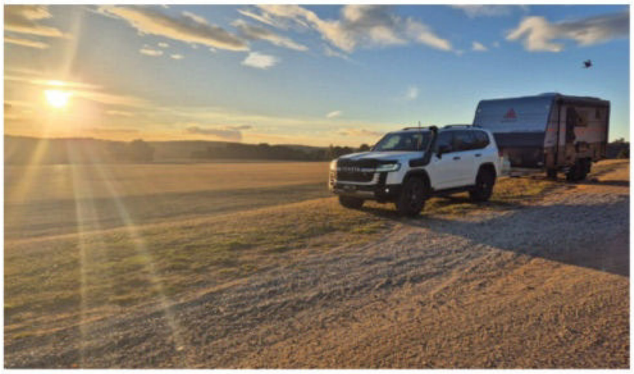
2016 TOYOTA LANDCRUISER PRADO

This photo was taken in Coffin Bay National Park. It's fitted with two-inch Pedders foam-cell shock absorbers, ARB bull bar, Safari snorkel, Oricom UHF and TPMS, spotlights, BFGoodrich A/T tyres, iTechworld lithium dual-battery system, Redarc BC-DC, Rhino-Rack Pioneer Platform, rear drawers, and myCoolman fridge. And yes, still on factory rims and tyre size. It gets us everywhere we need to get to along the beach or trails when camping and exploring.

ASH WOJ

2022 TOYOTA LANDCRUISER 300 GR SPORT

The only mods currently employed are tyres and a snorkel. It'll soon go in for an ARB two-tone bull bar, and a GVM/GCM upgrade to get her ready to do half a lap with the caravan and kids.



TEGAN AND STUART VANHAMBURG STOKES

2023 NISSAN PATROL Y62

It has 270,000km still on the original timing chain. Mods include a two-inch lift, DASH OffRoad front bar, a full exhaust and tune, homemade rear drawer, and an iTech-world lithium battery. We've been through the Goldfields, Exmouth, Esperance and South Lefroy.

ADRIAN TRIMNELL

2024 NISSAN Y62 PATROL

My Patrol has a pre-rego DMW GVM upgrade with DASH Offroad Interlock Airbag kit; Raslarr hooped bar; Carbon winch; Altiq lights; ROH Vapour rims; Mickey Thompson Baja Boss tyres; GME UHF; Safari snorkel; Next-Gen Clearview towing mirrors; ARB Base Rack; 120Ah slimline battery under false floor in rear; Redarc DC-DC charger; Redarc Towpro; TAG towbar; ARB twin-motor compressor in rear quarter; and a BushWrapz Pro. I try to get away to prospect for gold as often as possible in locations like Woods Point, Bright and Beechworth.

HAMISH MCKAY

2021 MITSUBISHI MR TRITON BLACK EDITION

Mods include Hamer bull bar; two-inch EFS lift kit; 18x9 +12 ROH Raid alloys with 285/60R18 Maxxis Razr AT tyres; Safari snorkel; factory flares (slightly modified to fit around the snorkel); Crown canopy; Stedi EVO spotlights; and Razorback seat covers. The photo was taken at Mount Cook in NZ, but the most notable trip she has been on so far is the Hopkins Valley and Oteake Conservation Park, which are reasonably local to me in North Otago.

FLORIAN WEIHERER

1991 TOYOTA LANDCRUISER 80 SERIES.

It’s a basic setup: Two-inch lift, 33s, Raslarr bar and sliders, and a winch. It’s set up for touring and mild to moderate 4WDing. My favourite place is K’gari (Fraser Island), the most challenging is Tasmania,

4X4 SHED

2025 MAZDA BT-50 GT

0088429 KM

DATE ACQUIRED: 13/03/25
PRICE: $66,170
KM SINCE LAST UPDATE: 1343KM
AV FUEL: 9.2/100KM

COR
SHELL
COR

WOODS POINT WHEELING

THE MAZDA BT-50 HEADS FOR THE HILLS ON A PHOTO SHOOT

WORDS AND PHOTOS **ELLEN DEWAR**

When one thinks of an average work day, many brace for the inevitable peak-hour traffic, hoping it's not bumper to bumper and that we make it to the office on time. But the 4X4 Australia office can be anywhere, with some day commutes best described as epic adventures.

A couple of months in and the BT-50 had really put on the kays. On this particular day the work commute started at 6.30am for a short 1.5 hour jaunt to meet Wheels magazine feature writer Andy Enright at Warburton at 8am.

We grabbed a quick coffee and headed east following the Yarra up the endless wriggly blacktop of Reefton Spur, slowly twisting upwards with the rattle of the diesel cutting into the music from the sound system. Engine noise was not excessive, just noticeable when slowing then accelerating from bend to bend that seem to go on and on.

We stopped along the way to capture some action imagery, with mist hovering amongst the trees. The BT-50's side panels proved flat enough to accommodate the suction cups required to mount the camera to capture rolling imagery solo.

When we arrived at Cumberland Junction, the road turned to dirt, and darkened into wilderness before we hit Matlock. Having off-road capability allowed us to duck up a little dirt side track to look for visually pleasing options. Here the track was quite overgrown and the front parking sensors beeped furiously and activated the AEB – note to self: "I really need to figure out how to deactivate that through the settings menu".

As we continued, so did the gloomy vibe, with fog rolling in and the gravel road issuing more and more potholes and gnarly corrugations, likely caused by the timber jinkers that come through here in place of the gold-mining carts of days gone by. Even with 30psi in the rtyres the BT-50 handled the conditions well, with the stability control kicking in nicely when necessary. Not only

WORKLIFE Just another day in the life of a leading automotive photographer was dodging potholes along here, but also the lyrebirds darting in and out of the scrub.

The rear left side of the canopy door didn't latch fully when I was loading up earlier that morning and it let a fair amount of dust into the tub, something to note if you're planning a lap of Oz. The latch is easily adjustable and if I had more time I would have sorted it properly before setting off.

The day was quickly disappearing as we rolled into Woods Point, just as the local copper was grabbing a quick snack from the General Store before shutting shop. With sunset earlier this time of year, I grabbed my last few photos. "Just one more…" , as the saying goes.

We started our descent with a dark run home ahead of us. We were eight hours into a long day but the BT-50 led the way with its Lightforce spotties at the ready. Driving and photographing on the way up I didn't pay much attention to the number of bends in the road – there are literally hundreds of them. On the descent I noticed the BT-50 likes to downshift gears early on, which normally I find a little unnecessary, but in this instance meant less braking was required ensuring smoother approaches to the dizzying bends.

I had the headlights set to Auto at first and they would dip, turn on and off, off and on, causing a lot of confusion and loss of vision. After going a little stir crazy, I switched the lights to full beam rather than Auto, which quickly sorted that out. On this twisty dark road the spotties came into their own; very bright with a good throw and spread of light.

Also bright, however, was the reflection of the infotainment screen on the rear glass of the canopy, shining back at me in the rear view mirror. You need to tone down the brightness as much as possible or it feels like someone is hovering over your shoulder.

I was grateful for the comfy heated seats on the drive home and finally rolled into the driveway at about 8.30pm. I unload the BT-50 feeling both pleased and relieved; it performed its duties superbly in challenging conditions.

Let's see what other adventures we can take it on. Stay tuned.

RUTS AND RUMBLES
The Woods Point road is corrugated in places but always a fun drive just a few hours from Melbourne

REAR VIEW

***4X4 AUSTRALIA* LOOKS BACK AT THE CHANGES IN THE INDUSTRY, THE RISE IN OUTBACK TOURING, THE EVOLUTIONARY SOPHISTICATION OF 4X4S, AND MORE**

4X4
AUSTRALIA
Snow time - fun time!
Complete guide to Snow Driving

30 YEARS AGO – JULY 1995

With south-eastern Australia being in the grip of winter we ran a couple of yarns about the skills required for snow driving, the best snow chains for ploughing through the cold wet stuff, and an informative piece about preparing your vehicle for a few days and nights in the snow, with Alpine Diesel being just one of the things you'd better have. Nothing much has changed since those days and you still need to be prepared to head into the white stuff.

Amongst the many other stories on vehicles and adventurous locations we paid tribute to a legend of the Outback – Len Beadell had passed away just a few weeks previously and Moonie penned the words on this great character who opened up much of the desert country for us four-wheelers to visit and enjoy. Len's legacy lives on in the roads he made and you can learn more at his FB page: 'Len Beadell - The last true Australian Explorer'.

Another legendary desert adventurer also graced the pages of this issue with Denis Bartell writing about his latest crossing of the Simpson Desert by camel; what a trip that was… and still is!

4X4
AUSTRALIA
STRETCHED TO THE MAX!
DUAL-CAB DUST-UP
BEST UTE
Navara v HiLux v Rodeo
WIN
FULL-BLOWN FIRST DRIVES

20 YEARS AGO – JULY 2005

There was something for everyone in this jam-packed issue in which we tested a whole range of vehicles from a spectrum of dual-cab utes to Range Rovers, Grand Cherokees, the Holden Crewman Cross 6 AWD, a Kia Sorento and a US-based Toyota Tacoma.

There was adventure aplenty with Allan Whiting heading to the little visited (still!) Expedition NP in Central Queensland, while Moonie was out drifting along the Daly River in the Northern Territory.

Women got some of the recognition due to them when Danielle Lancaster met up with four women who used their 4x4s for work and recreation. Those jobs included a conservation volunteer group leader, an outback publican and a channel country pastoralist, as well as the late Jan Scudamore who was an absolute dynamo in the 4x4 movement, especially in her home state of Queensland.

There was more with the offroad action pages featuring the fabulous Condo 750 and the very different but action-packed Xtreme Winch Challenge. It was a magazine for every taste!

NEW HILUX REVEALED!
4X4
AUSTRALIA
JOHN ROOTH JOINS OUR CREW
NAILING NAVARA
FIRST AUSSIE BUSH DRIVE OF NISSAN'S NEW UTE
ACROSS THE BIGHT

10 YEARS AGO – JULY 2015

This issue featured our crossing of the Great Australian Bight, surely one of the most challenging and spectacular 4x4 trips you can do in this country. For this journey we had a couple of the latest Discovery V6 wagons plus a mix of Toyotas. Needless to say it was a fabulous journey from climbing the steep granite of Wylie Head to the soft beaches west of Eucla.

Other adventure destinations covered in this issue included the Murray-Sunset NP in Victoria, the Holland Track in Western Australia, the old Glen Innes Road in New South Wales along with Chambers Pillar in the Northern Territory.

For a look back to how vehicle expeditions were carried out in years past we had an article on Michael Terry and his expeditions in the 1920s.

Moving up to the modern era we test drove the latest Mitsubishi Triton, and we put three of the large wagons on the market – the Patrol, the Cruiser and the Discovery 4 – through their paces. We had the 200 Series Cruiser on top and today, even with the latest 300 on the market, the 200 still makes a great touring vehicle.

SUV SURGE BUT RANGER STILL THE BOSS

Despite an increasing consumer preference for SUVs, the Ford Ranger and Toyota HiLux remain immovable atop the 4x4 sales charts.

Ford shifted a total of 4481 Ranger 4x4s in May 2025, increasing year-to-date sales to 20,719. Toyota sold a total of 4208 HiLux 4x4s in the month, increasing its YTD sales to 16,970. These figures are substantially lower compared to 2024. At the same time last year, the Ranger 4x4 had accumulated 24,778 sales (-16.4 per cent in 2025) and the HiLux 4x4 had 20,004 sales in the bank (-15.2 per cent).

Market trends indicate the SUV segment is the only division showing growth compared to the same month last year (+3962 sales; +6.6 per cent). The LCV segment had 1835 fewer sales (-7.2 per cent); and the Passenger segment was down a whopping 7086 sales (-33.3 per cent).

Digging deeper reveals the SUV segment now holds a 60.4 per cent share of the overall market, up from 55.8 per cent in 2024 (YTD). The Passenger segment has declined from 18.0 per cent to 13.7 per cent; while the LCV segment remains steady at 22.3 per cent.

This is highlighted by the total sales for both the Prado (2732) and Ford Everest (2369) i which are kisrd as SUVs by the FCAU, n May. This positions the two off-road wagons behind only the Ford Ranger and Toyota HiLux on the 4x4 monthly charts and their popularity was part of the reason for this issue's cover story.

This is reflected on the year-to-date charts, which see Prado and Everest sales increase to a total of 13,406 and 9589 respectively, again positioning them behind only the Ranger and HiLux on the 4x4 YTD charts.

Sales were also strong in May for the 300 Series LandCruiser, posting a total of 2040 sales for the month following the release of the latest updeted version, up from 1022 sales registered in April. Its biggest competitor, the Nissan Patrol, posted 661 sales for the month so it seems to be back to normal prceeding in this two horse race.

BYD sold a total of 1302 Sharks in May, which is consistent with the total number of deliveries registered in April (1293). A total of 7431 BYD Sharks have been sold so far this year.

In the full-size 4x4 pickup segment, Chevrolet Silverado posted 247 sales for the month, leading the Ram 1500 (223 sales), Toyota Tundra (31 sales) and Ford F-150 (28 sales).

JUST THE FACTS

Top-selling 4x4s in May 2025
Source: VFACTS

VEHICLE	UNITS
1. Ford Ranger	4481
2. Toyota HiLux	4208
3. Toyota Prado	2732
4. Ford Everest	2369
5. Toyota LC300	2040
6. Isuzu D-MAX	2022
7. Isuzu MU-X	1643
8. Mitsubishi Triton	1328
9. BYD Shark	1302
10. Mazda BT-50	1059

Top-selling 4x4s year-to-date to May 2025
Source: VFACTS

VEHICLE	UNITS
1. Ford Ranger	20,719
2. Toyota HiLux	16,970
3. Toyota Prado	13,406
4. Ford Everest	9589
5. Isuzu D-MAX	8565
6. BYD Shark	7431
7. Mitsubishi Triton	6366
8. Isuzu MU-X	5785
9. Mazda BT-50	5199
10. Toyota LC79	4165

THE SCORE

4X4 MARKETPLACE

FORD

5-year/unlimited km **www.ford.com.au**

RANGER

The next-gen Ranger took the best-seller crown away from HiLux in 2023. Full-time 4x4 is offered on all V6 models and the 2.0TD Wildtrak X. There is a price hike across the range this month.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
Single XL C/C	47,980	BiT4/2.0	A10	500	154	1903	1327	3500	80
Super XL C/C	50,480	BiT4/2.0	A10	500	154	2007	1223	3500	80
Super XL P/U	52,380	BiT4/2.0	A10	500	154	2167	1063	3500	80
Double XL C/C	48,980	SiT4/2.0	A6	405	125	2046	1144	3500	80
Double XL C/C	51,780	BiT4/2.0	A10	500	154	2072	1158	3500	80
Double XL P/U	50,880	SiT4/2.0	A6	405	125	2190	1000	3500	80
Double XL P/U	53,680	BiT4/2.0	A10	500	154	2216	1014	3500	80
Double XLS P/U	57,630	BiT4/2.0	A10	500	154	2216	1014	3500	80
Super XLT P/U	61,390	BiT4/2.0	A10	500	154	2178	1052	3500	80
Double XLT P/U	63,390	BiT4/2.0	A10	500	154	2225	1005	3500	80
Double XLT C/C	65,690	V6/3.0	A10	600	184	2129	1151	3500	80
Double XLT P/U	63,640	BiT4/2.0	A10	500	154	2217	1015	3500	80
Double XLT P/U	68,840	V6/3.0	A10	600	184	2285	995	3500	80
Double Sport P/U	66,140	BiT4/2.0	A10	500	154	2242	988	3500	80
Double Sport P/U	71,340	V6/3.0	A10	600	184	2300	980	3500	80
Dbl Wildtrak P/U	69,640	BiT4/2.0	A10	500	154	2295	985	3500	80
Dbl Tremor P/U	69,690	BiT4/2.0	A10	500	154	2419	901	3500	80
Dbl Wildtrak P/U	74,840	V6/3.0	A10	600	184	2353	997	3500	80
Dbl Wildtrak X P/U	77,640	BiT4/2.0	A10	500	154	2432	918	3500	80
Dbl Platinum P/U	80,640	V6/3.0	A10	600	184	N/A	N/A	3500	80
Dbl Raptor P/U	90,440	V6P/3.0	A10	583	292	2431	753	2500	80

EVEREST

Everest's four variants are joined by two more – the Wildtrak and Tremor – sitting between Sport and Platinum and available with the 3.0-litre TDV6 donk. There's also a price increase for this month.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
Ambiente	59,240	L4TD/2.0	A10	500	154	2367	733	3500	80
Trend	67,040	L4TD/2.0	A10	500	154	2383	717	3500	80
Sport	74,640	V6TD/3.0	A10	600	184	2454	696	3500	80
Tremor	76,590	V6TD/3.0	A10	600	184	N/A	N/A	3500	80
Wildtrak	76,950	V6TD/3.0	A10	600	184	2488	662	3500	80
Platinum	81,200	V6TD/3.0	A10	600	184	2492	658	3500	80

F150

Ford Australia has brought the F150 back to our shores with two models available in two wheelbases. The long wheelbase adds $995 to the price and also gets you a longer cargo bed.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
XLT (SWB)	106,950	V6TP/3.5	A10	678	298	2451	769	4500	136
XLT (LWB)	107,945	V6TP/3.5	A10	678	298	N/A	N/A	4500	136
Lariat (SWB)	139,950	V6TP/3.5	A10	678	298	2555	710	4500	136
Lariat (LWB)	140,945	V6TP/3.5	A10	678	298	N/A	N/A	4500	136

BYD

5-year/unlimited km **www.ford.com.au**

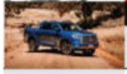
SHARK6

Build Your Dreams first entry to the Australian market is the Shark double0cab ute and it comes with a hybrid EV powertrain and a preper 4x4 system

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
Shark 6 Premium	57,900	T4PHEV/1.5	CVT	650	321	2710	790	2500	60

GWM

7-year/unlimited km **www.gmwute.com.au**



UTE

GWM's next-gen Cannon features a more grunty 2.4-litre turbo-diesel four-cylinder donk (replacing the previous-gen 2.0TD) , backed by a nine-speed auto gearbox. It also has a higher braked towing capacity.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
Lux	40,490*	L4TD/2.4	A9	480	135	2230	995	3500	75
Ultra	43,490*	L4TD/2.4	A9	480	135	2230	995	3500	75
Vanta	45,490*	L4TD/2.4	A9	480	135	2230	995	3500	75
XSR	49,990*	L4TD/2.4	A9	480	135	2230	875	3500	75

TANK 300

The Tank 300's duo of 2.0-litre petrol-electric hybrid versions are now joined by two 2.0-litre petrol-only powered rigs at significantly lower asking prices.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
Lux	46,990	L4TD/2.4	A9	480	135	2280	600	3000	75
Ultra (petrol)	50,990	L4TP/2.0	A8	380	162	2155	610	3000	75
Ultra (diesel)	55,990	L4TD/2.4	A9	480	135	2280	600	3000	75
Ultra (hybrid)	60,990	L4HY/2.0	A9	648	255	2335	600	3000	75

GMSV

www.gmspecialtyvehicles.com.au

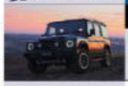
CHEVROLET SILVERADO 1500

For 2023 Chevrolet dropped the previous entry-level model, the LT Trail Boss. A new hero ZR2 model is now positioned at the top of the two-model range. Both powered by a 6.2-litre petrol V8.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
ZR2	138,000*	V8/6.2	A10	624	313	2583	717	4200	91
LTZ Premium	163,000	V8/6.2	A10	624	313	2543	757	4500	91

INEOS

www.ineosgrenadier.com/en/au/



GRENADIER

Ineos brings back the simple, durable 4x4 vehicle that adventurers and organisations want for serious off-road travel, available with both petrol and diesel powertrains and two-seat (2s) or five-seat (5s) interiors.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
Utility wagon 2s	104,000	I6P/3.0	A8	450	210	2618	932	3500	90
Fieldmaster 2s	122,000	I6D/3.0	A8	550	183	2693	857	3500	90
Trialmaster 2s	122,000	I6P/3.0	A8	450	210	2643	907	3500	90
Station wagon 5s	105,000	I6P/3.0	A8	450	210	2643	907	3500	90
Trialmaster 5s	123,000	I6P/3.0	A8	450	210	2643	907	3500	90
Fieldmaster 5s	123,000	I6D/3.0	A8	550	183	2718	832	3500	90

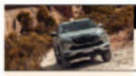
ISUZU UTE

6-year/150,000km **www.isuzuute.com.au**

D-MAX

D-MAX has cut its links with GM and is an all-Isuzu affair. The latest model is a huge step up with class-leading safety tech, more power and torque from the 3.0L, and fresh, aggressive styling.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
SX Single c/c	42,700	I4TD/3.0	M6	450	140	1780	1310	3500	76
SX Space c/c	48,200	I4TD/3.0	A6	450	140	1860	1240	3500	76
LS-M Crew c/c	54,300	I4TD/3.0	A6	450	140	2030	1070	3500	76
LS-U Crew c/c	61,000	I4TD/3.0	A6	450	140	1970	1130	3500	76
LS-U Space p/u	59,500	I4TD/3.0	A6	450	140	2000	1100	3500	76
SX Crew c/c	49,200	I4TD/3.0	A6	450	140	1910	1190	3500	76
SX Crew p/u	50,700	I4TD/1.9	A6	350	110	N/A	N/A	3000	76
SX Crew p/u	52,700	I4TD/3.0	A6	450	140	2035	1065	3500	76
LS-M Crew p/u	55,800	I4TD/3.0	A6	450	140	2030	1070	3500	76
X-Rider Crew p/u	59,500	I4TD/3.0	6	450	140	N/A	N/A	3500	76
LS-U Crew p/u	59,000	I4TD/3.0	A6	450	140	2045	1055	3500	76
LS-U+ Crew p/u	65,500	I4TD/3.0	A6	450	140	2115	985	3500	76
X-Terrain Crew p/u	67,990	I4TD/3.0	A6	450	140	2130	970	3500	76
Blade Crew p/u	76,990*	I4TD/3.0	A6	450	140	N/A	N/A	3500	76



MU-X

Isuzu's seven-seat wagon based on the D-MAX ute underpinnings, but with a smooth-riding coil-spring rear suspension. Buyers have the option of the tried-and-true 3.0-litre TD or new 1.9-litre oiler.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
LS-M	53,400	L4TD/1.9	A6	350	110	2140	735	3000	80
LS-M	55,400	L4TD/3.0	A6	450	140	2092	658	3500	80
LS-U	59,900	L4TD/1.9	A6	350	110	2088	685	3000	80
LS-U	61,900	L4TD/3.0	A6	450	140	2142	608	3500	80
LS-T	67,990	L4TD/3.0	A6	450	140	2157	593	3500	80
Tour Mate									

JEEP

5-year/unlimited km **www.jeep.com.au**

WRANGLER

JL Wrangler has true off-road credentials and great versatility. In Rubicon-spec, the Wrangler is an absolute off-road weapon.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
Rubicon (2D)	82,950	I4TP/2.0	A8	400	200	1762	551	1497	81
Sport S (4D)	75,950	I4TP/2.0	A8	400	200	N/A	N/A	2495	81
Overland (4D)	83,950	I4TP/2.0	A8	400	200	1900	560	2495	81
Rubicon (4D)	89,450	I4TP/2.0	A8	400	200	1992	570	2495	81

GRAND CHEROKEE

Jeep's fifth-gen Grand Cherokee five-seater runs a grunty V6 petrol engine across most models, with a PHEV powerplant available on the new 4xe variant.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
Night Eagle	65,450	V6/3.6	A8	344	210	2167	N/A	2813	87
Limited	72,950	V6/3.6	A8	344	210	2167	N/A	2813	87
Overland	77,750	V6/3.6	A8	344	210	2167	N/A	2813	87
Summit Res. 4xe	110,850	L4PHY/2.0	A8	637	280	2536	N/A	2722	72

GRAND CHEROKEE L

The seven-seat Grand Cherokee runs V6 petrol power exclusively. Four variants on offer, with Overland and Summit Reserve featuring Jeep's Quadra-Lift air suspension.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
Night Eagle	69,450	V6/3.6	A8	344	210	2190	N/A	2813	87
Limited	75,950	V6/3.6	A8	344	210	2190	N/A	2813	87
Overland	80,450	V6/3.6	A8	344	210	2270	N/A	2813	87
Summit Reserve	90,450	V6/3.6	A8	344	210	2270	N/A	2813	87

GLADIATOR

Jeep's double-cab pick-up comes in two spec levels, with the Pentastar V6 and 8-speed auto in both. The Night Eagle is the entry level while the Rubicon is the better equipped off-roader.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
Night Eagle	78,250	V6/3.6P	A8	347	209	2104	693	2721	83
Rubicon	87,250	V6/3.6P	A8	347	209	2215	693	2721	83

LAND ROVER www.landrover.com.au

DEFENDER 90

Defender 90 range closely mimics the 110 wagon range but in a shorter three-door wagon body. Right from the four-cylinder petrol motors, through the various diesels, and up to the stonking V8.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
D90 P300	80,540	I4/2.0P	A8	400	221	2074	N/A	3500	90
D90 S P300	88,870	I4/2.0P	A8	400	221	2074	N/A	3500	90
D90 S D250	92,626	I6/3.0D	A8	570	183	2303	667	3500	89
D90 SE P400	110,870	I6/3.0P	A8	550	294	2141	N/A	3500	90
D90 X P400	154,546	I6/3.0P	A8	550	294	2141	N/A	3500	90
D90 P525	191,288	V8/5.0P	A8	625	386	2470	N/A	3000	90

DEFENDER 110

The 'new' Defender has been around for a while now, with incremental increases in power/torque outputs, engine options and (sadly) pricing along the way. Its bling exterior belies its off-road capability.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
P400 S	93,907	I6/3.0P	A8	550	294	N/A	N/A	3500	90
D350 SE	108,795	I6/3.0D	A8	700	257	N/A	N/A	3500	90
P400 SE	114,165	I6/3.0P	A8	550	294	N/A	N/A	3500	90
P400 HSE	128,815	I6/3.0P	A8	550	294	N/A	N/A	3500	90
D350 HSE	124,040	I6/3.0D	A8	700	257	N/A	N/A	3500	90
D350 X	157,224	I6/3.0D	A8	700	257	N/A	N/A	3500	90
D350 Sedona Ed.	134,706	I6/3.0D	A8	700	257	N/A	N/A	3500	90
P400 X	150,620	I6/3.0P	A8	550	294	N/A	N/A	3500	90
P400e SE	126,275	I4PH/2.0P	A8	640	297	N/A	N/A	3500	90
P400e HSE	137,975	I4PH/2.0P	A8	640	297	N/A	N/A	3500	90
P525 V8	198,914	V8/5.0P	A8	625	386	N/A	N/A	3500	90
P635 OCTA	291,542	V8/5.0P	A8	750	467	N/A	N/A	3500	90

DEFENDER 130

The largest-ever Defender is here and brings with it a lot more rear cargo space, along with some sweet powerplant options for this biggest of Brit off-roaders.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
D300 X-Dyna SE	129,365	I6/3.0D	A8	650	220	N/A	N/A	3500	90
P400 X-Dyna SE	133,471	I6/3.0P	A8	550	294	N/A	NA	3500	90
P400 Outbound	135,562	I6/3.0P	A8	550	294	N/A	N/A	3500	90
P500	216,1970	V8/5.0P	A8	610	368	N/A	N/A	3500	90

DISCOVERY

Land Rover Discovery combines excellent on-road dynamics with impressive off-road capability. Strong performance comes via the choice of V6 turbo-diesel or V6 petrol powerplants.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
D350 S Dynamic	116,006	I6TD/3.0	A8	700	257	2109	831	3500	90
D350 SE Dynamic	123,564	I6TD/3.0	A8	700	257	2236	814	3500	90
D350 HSE Dynam	130,405	I6TD/3.0	A8	700	257	2236	814	3500	90
D350 35th Anniv.	133,176	I6TD/3.0	A8	700	257	2236	814	3500	90
P360 S RDynamic	121,539	I6TP/3.0	A8	500	265	2236	814	3500	90
P360 SE Dynamic	122,070	I6TP/3.0	A8	500	265	2236	814	3500	90
P360 HSE Dynam	128,430	I6TP/3.0	A8	500	265	2236	814	3500	90

RANGE ROVER SPORT

There are six Rangie Sport models to choose from in this latest incarnation, with both the diesel (in three different outputs), and petrol powerplants featuring mild-hybrid tech.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
D250 SE	144,915	I6TD/3.0	A8	600	183	2390	830	3500	80
D300 SE Dynamic	155,876	I6TD/3.0	A8	650	221	2390	830	3500	80
D350 HSE Dyn	173,826	I6TD/3.0	A8	700	258	2435	785	3500	80
D350 Autobio	197,176	I6TD/3.0	A8	700	225	2435	830	3500	80
P360 SE Dynamic	139,000	I6P/3.0	A8	500	265	2271	N/A	3500	80
P400 SE Dynamic	160,576	I6P/3.0	A8	550	294	2316	N/A	3500	80
P400 HSE Dyn	172,676	I6P/3.0	A8	550	294	N/A	N/A	3500	80
P460 HSE Dyn	188,100	I6P/3.0	A8	660	338	2730	720	3500	80
P460 Autobio	211,488	I6P/3.0	A8	660	338	2730	720	3500	80
P530 Autobio	233,961	V8TTP/4.4	A8	750	390	2436	814	3500	80
P635 SV Edition	359,715	V8TTP/4.4	A8	750	467	N/A	N/A	3500	80

RANGE ROVER

Bespoke personalisation and new hybrid powertrains herald in revised Range Rover line-up.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
D350 HSE	258,489	I6/3.0	A8	700	258	N/A	N/A	3500	80
P460e HSE	263,468	I6e/3.0	A8	660	338	N/A	N/A	3000	72
P460e LWB HSE	270,880	I6e/3.0	A8	660	338	N/A	N/A	3000	72
P530 HSE	282,500	V8/4.4	A8	750	390	N/A	N/A	3500	90
P460e Autobiog.	296,427	I6e/3.0	A8	660	338	N/A	N/A	3000	72
D350 A/B	298,659	I6/3.0	A8	700	258	N/A	N/A	3500	80
P460e LWB A/B	298,999	I6e/3.0	A8	660	338	N/A	N/A	3000	72
D350 LWB A/B	304,530	I6/3.0	A8	700	258	N/A	N/A	3500	80
D350 LWB 7s A/B	306,075	I6/3.0	A8	700	258	N/A	N/A	3500	80
P530 Autobiog.	331,434	V8/4.4	A8	750	390	N/A	N/A	3500	90
P530 LWB A/B	337,614	V8/4.4	A8	750	390	N/A	N/A	3500	90
P530 LWB 7s A/B	339,314	V8/4.4	A8	750	390	N/A	N/A	3500	90
P615 SV	395,655	V8/4.4	A8	750	452	N/A	N/A	3500	90
P615 LWB SV	443,436	V8/4.4	A8	750	452	N/A	N/A	3500	90

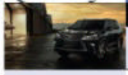
LDV 7-year/200,000km www.ldvautomotive.com.au

T60

Chinese ute brings five-star safety to the budget-priced dual-cab segment. Revamped in 2021, with the Pro variants bringing more power and redesigned front-end.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
Max Pro (manual)	41,042	I4/2.0	M6	500	160	N/A	935	3000	73
Max Pro (auto)	43,148	I4/2.0	A8	500	160	N/A	925	3000	73
Max Luxe (manual)	45,779	I4/2.0	M6	500	160	N/A	935	3000	73
Max Luxe (auto)	47,884	I4/2.0	A8	500	160	2900	925	3000	73
Max Luxe Mega Tub	49,463	I4/2.0	A8	500	160	2900	925	3000	73
Max Plus (manual)	48,411	I4/2.0	M6	500	160	2900	925	3000	73
Max Plus Mega Tub	52,095	I4/2.0	A8	500	160	N/A	N/A	3000	73

LEXUS 5-year/unlimited www.lexus.com.au



LX

Now with two powerplant options – the diesel is a trick twin-turbo V6; the petrol is rorty, if not as glorious as the previous-gen V8 – and improved dynamics, this is now capital "L" for luxury with bite.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
LX500	155,976	V6TTD/3.3	A10	700	227	2690	TBC	3500	80
LX500 SL	172,976	V6TTD/3.3	A10	700	227	2690	TBC	3500	80
LX500 SL (7-seat)	175,576	V6TTD/3.3	A10	700	227	2690	TBC	3500	80
LX500 F Sport	178,976	V6TTD/3.3	A10	700	227	2690	TBC	3500	80
LX600	159,476	V6TTP/3.5	A10	650	305	2660	TBC	3500	110
LX600 SL	176,476	V6TTP/3.5	A10	650	305	2660	TBC	3500	110
LX600 SL (7-seat)	180,276	V6TTP/3.5	A10	650	305	2660	TBC	3500	110
LX600 F Sport	182,476	V6TTP/3.5	A10	650	305	2660	TBC	3500	110
LX600 Ultra Lux	217,976	V6TTP/3.5	A10	650	305	2660	TBC	3500	110

MAHINDRA 5-year/unlimited www.mahindra.com.au

PIK-UP

Now dual-cab only and still with the option of tub or no tub, this tough and reliable farm truck is proving popular out bush and is good bang for your workhorse bucks.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
Dual Cab	39,990*	L4TD/2.2	A6	330	103	1940	1210	2500	80

SCORPIO

It may be missing some key safety technology, but the Scorpio six-seater isn't just a good value-for-money package, it's a good rig overall.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
Z8	41,990*	L4TD/2.2	A6	400	129	1900	525	2500	57
Z8L	45,990*	L4TD/2.2	A6	400	129	2100	510	2500	57

*This is a nationwide drive-away price, not a list price, and includes on-roads.

MAZDA

5-year/unlimited km **www.mazda.com.au**

BT-50

The BT-50 has stepped away from its Ford roots, as Mazda partnered with Isuzu for the new model. That means Isuzu powertrains and class-leading safety wrapped in a svelte Mazda skin.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
Dual XS p/u	52,930	I4TD/1.9	A6	350	110	1935	1165	3500	76
Single XT c/c	43,520	I4TD/3.0	M6	450	140		1186	3500	76
Single XT c/c	46,733	I4TD/3.0	A6	450	140		1186	3500	76
Extra XT c/c	47,020	I4TD/3.0	M6	450	140		1135	3500	76
Extra XT c/c	49,953	I4TD/3.0	A6	450	140		1135	3500	76
Dual XT c/c	51,960	I4TD/3.0	A6	450	140		1096	3500	76
Dual XT c/c	51,330	I4TD/3.0	M6	450	140		1106	3500	76
Dual XT p/u	52,730	I4TD/3.0	M6	450	140		1095	3500	76
Dual XT p/u	55,080	I4TD/3.0	A6	450	140		1090	3500	76
Dual XTR c/c	57,880	I4TD./.0	A6	450	140	1910	1190	3500	76
Dual XTR p/u	56,780	I4TD/3.0	M6	450	140		1080	3500	76
Dual XTR p/u	60,623	I4TD/3.0	A6	450	140		1070	3500	76
Dual GT p/u	57,090	I4TD/3.0	M6	450	140		1075	3500	76
Dual GT p/u	62,660	I4TD/3.0	A6	450	140		1065	3500	76
Dual SP p/u	63,090	I4TD/3.0	M6	450	140	2198	902	3500	76
Dual SP p/u	68,690	I4TD/3.0	A6	450	140	2208	892	3500	76
Dual Thunder p/u	74,095	I4TD/3.0	A6	450	140	2213	887	3500	76

MERCEDES

3-year/200,000km **www.mercedes-benz.com.au**

G-CLASS

With triple diff locks, long-travel coil suspension and rugged construction, Merc's Gelandewagen is off-road heritage writ large. Unfortunately, so is the price tag on an updated 30-year-old design.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
G63 AMG	259,600	V8/4.0	A9	850	430	2560	640	3500	100
G400d	233,776	I6/2.9	A9	700	243	2489	661	3500	112

MITSUBISHI

7-year/150,000km **www.mitsubishi-motors.com.au**

PAJERO SPORT

Pajero Sport replaced the Challenger in Mitsubishi's 4x4 range. It's still on a Triton ute chassis but with rear coils under the back and bespoke bodywork. 2020 refresh added Dynamic Shield front end.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
GLX (5-seat)	51,540	L4TD/2.4	A8	430	133	2145	630	3100	68
GLS (7s)	56,890	L4TD/2.4	A8	430	133	2195	580	3100	68
GLS Deluxe (7s)	57,440	L4TD/2.4	A8	430	133	2204	571	3100	68
Exceed (7s)	62,590	L4TD/2.4	A8	430	133	2209	566	3100	68
GSR (7s)	64,840	L4TD/2.4	A8	430	133	2209	566	3100	68

TRITON

MR Triton consists of a four-model line-up that tops out with the GSR. All models get a 2.4-litre, turbocharged diesel engine with a six-speed transmission.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
GLX Single c/c	33,240	L4TD/2.4	M6	430	133	1660	1235	3000	75
GLX Single c/c	37,490	L4TD/2.4	A6	430	133	1665	1235	3000	75
GLX Club c/c	39,940	L4TD/2.4	M6	430	133	1765	1135	3000	75
GLX ADAS Club c/c	39,040	L4TD/2.4	A6	430	133	1780	1120	3000	75
GLX Dual c/c	41,440	L4TD/2.4	M6	430	133	1795	1105	3100	75
GLX ADAS Dual c/c	39,790	L4TD/2.4	A6	430	133	1795	1105	3100	75
GLX+ Club p/u	45,440	L4TD/2.4	A6	430	133	1930	970	3100	75
GLX Dual p/u	37,490	L4TD/2.4	M6	430	133	1920	980	3100	75
GLX Dual p/u	50,940	L4TD/2.4	A6	430	133	1920	980	3100	75
GLX ADAS Dual p/u	38,540	L4TD/2.4	M6	430	133	1951	949	3100	75
GLX ADAS Dual p/u	41,040	L4TD/2.4	A6	430	133	1956	944	3100	75
GLX+ Dual p/u	44,940	L4TD/2.4	M6	430	133	1915	985	3100	75
GLX+ Dual p/u	53,290	L4TD/2.4	A6	430	133	1915	985	3100	75
GLX-R	41,990	L4TD/2.4	M6	430	133	N/A	N/A	3100	75
GLX-R	56,740	L4TD/2.4	A6	430	133	N/A	N/A	3100	75
GLS Dual p/u	45,440	L4TD/2.4	M6	430	133	1935	965	3100	75
GLS Dual p/u	59,090	L4TD/2.4	A6	430	133	1935	965	3100	75
GLS Premium	52,790	L4TD/2.4	A6	430	133	2042	848	3100	75
GSR	63,840	L4TD/2.4	A6	430	133	1999	901	3100	75

NISSAN

5-year/unlimited km **www.nissan.com.au**

PATROL Y62

In a segment that drinks diesel, top-spec Patrol is available in V8-petrol guise only. Fully independent suspension is backed by electronic traction aids. Updated model launched late in 2019.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
Ti	89,260	V8/5.6	A7	560	298	2812	688	3500	140
Ti-L	101,960	V8/5.6	A7	560	298	2708	746	3500	140
PRO-4X Warrior	105,520	V8/5.6	A7	560	289	2884	736	3500	140

NAVARA D23

The latest iteration of Nissan's D23 Navara ute range arrives with a bolder look and a revised line-up. Pro-4X Warrior has to be the best navara produced ever!.

Single SL c/c	40,928	L4TD/2.3	M6	403	120	1614	1296	3500	80
King SL c/c	47,428	L4TD/2.3	A7	403	120	1727	1183	3500	80
King SL p/u	49,228	L4TD/2.3	A7	450	140	1941	969	3500	80
King ST-X p/u	59,323	L4TD/2.3	A7	450	140	1944	966	3500	80
Dual SL c/c	46,428	L4TD/2.3	M6	403	120	1759	1147	3500	80
Dual SL p/u	48,228	L4TD/2.3	M6	450	140	1823	1087	3500	80
Dual ST p/u	53,333	L4TD/2.3	M6	450	140	N/A	N/A	3500	80
Dual ST-X p/u	56,823	L4TD/2.3	M6	450	140	1917	993	3500	80
Dual ST-X p/u	58,270	L4TD/2.3	A7	450	140	1921	989	3500	80
Dual SL Warrior	59,628	L4TD/2.3	A7	450	140	2169	1081	3500	80
PRO-4X	59,783	L4TD/2.3	M6	450	140	2186	724	3500	80
PRO-4X Warrior	69,143	L4TD/2.3	A7	450	140	2151	1019	3500	80

RAM

3-year/100,000 km **www.ramtrucks.com.au**

RAM 1500

You'll find Ram trucks here from various importers, but the official distributor is Ram Trucks Australia. Currently selling the DT Ram 1500.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
Laramie	137,950	V8P/5.7	A8	556	291	2617	833	4500	98
Laramie Sport	141,950	V8P/5.7	A8	556	291	2671	779	4500	98
Big Horn	119,950	V8P/5.7	A8	556	291	N/A	N/A	4500	98
Limited	156,950	V8P/5.7	A8	556	291	2749	701	4500	98
TRX	224,950	V8P/6.2	A8	882	523	3033	767	3500	125

RAM 2500

The 2500 is the first of the heavy duty Ram models and is only available in Laramie specification in Australia. Powered by the Cummins in-line six, the 2500 is a torque monster and towing champion.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
2500 Laramie	172,950	I6d/6.7	A6	1152	276	3660	835	4500	117

RAM 3500

The 1500 is the standard model while the 2500 and 3500 Rams are the Heavy Duty versions packing HD drivelines, Cummins diesel engines and huge lowing capacities. New HD models also coming soon.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
Laramie Crew	177,950	I6TD/6.7	A6	1152	276	3596	1713	6170*	132

SSANGYONG

7-year/unlimited km **www.ssangyong.com.au**

MUSSO

Thrifty South Korean dual-cab has been reborn with more subdued styling and an unbeatable warranty. XLV variant adds segment-topping tray length to the line-up's killer pricing.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
EX	30,490	L4TD/2.2	M6	400	133	2177	703	3500	75
EX	32,490	L4TD/2.2	A6	400	133	2192	688	3500	75
ELX	40,000	L4TD/2.2	A6	400	133	2192	688	3500	75
Ultimate	45,000	L4TD/2.2	A6	400	133	2192	688	3500	75
ELX XLV	33,990	L4TD/2.2	M6	400	133	2160	1025	3500	75
ELX XLV	41,500	L4TD/2.2	A6	400	133	2170	1025	3500	75
Ultimate XLV	46,500	L4TD/2.2	A6	400	133	2170	880	3500	75
Ultimate Luxury	48,000	L4TD/2.2	A6	400	133	2170	880	3500	75
Ult. Luxury XLV	49,500	L4TD/2.2	A6	400	133	2170	880	3500	75

REXTON

The South Korean manufacturer's large wagon now has three variants and a smooth-shifting eight-speed auto gear box. It is loaded with kit and comes with a lean price tag.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
ELX	50,000	L4TD/2.2	A8	441	148	2233	727	3500	70
Adventure	54,000	L4TD/2.2	A8	441	148	2233	727	3500	70
Ultimate	58,000	L4TD/2.2	A8	441	148	2233	727	3500	70
Ultimate Sport	60,000	L4TD/2.2	A8	441	148	2233	727	3500	70

SUZUKI

3-year/100,000km **www.suzuki.com.au**

JIMNY

Pint-sized cult classic returns in fourth-gen guise. Live axles front and rear and retro styling means it will remain a favourite on the off-road scene.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
3-door Hardtop	28,490	L4/1.5	M5	130	75	1095	340	1300	40
3-door Hardtop	29,990	L4/1.5	A4	130	75	1110	325	1300	40

TOYOTA

5-year/unlimited km **www.toyota.com.au**

PRADO

The all-new 250 Prado is here. It is porkier than the 150, has lower payloads, less fuel capacity, higher tow-rating, the 2.8TD donk carries over, and prices have jumped, so it's a curious mix. Will sell like crazy.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
GX	72,500	I4TD/2.8	A8	500	150	2495	605	3500	110
GXL	79,990	I4TD/2.8	A8	500	150	2535	615	3500	110
VX	87,400	I4TD/2.8	A8	500	150	2570	610	3500	110
Altitude	92,700	I4TD/2.8	A8	500	150	2520	660	3500	110
Kakadu	99,990	I4TD/2.8	A8	500	150	2595	605	3500	110

FORTUNER

Toyota's HiLux-based seven-seat wagon competes with Ford Everest, Mitsubishi Pajero Sport and Isuzu MU-X. Smaller than a Prado but still a proper 4x4 wagon.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
GX	53,775	I4TD/2.8	A6	500	150	2175	625	3100	80
GXL	58,895	I4TD/2.8	A6	500	150	2185	615	3100	80
Crusade	66,755	I4TD/2.8	A6	500	150	2190	610	3100	80

LAND CRUISER 300 SERIES

It's out with the V8s and in with an all-new V6 diesel engine in the new 300 Series Land Cruiser. There are now six models in the range including the new GR Sport and Sahara ZX models.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	–TOWING	FUEL
GX	96,991	V6TD/3.3L	A10	700	227	2495	785	3500	110
GXL	108,791	V6TD/3.3L	A10	700	227	2580	700	3500	110
VX	120,991	V6TD/3.3L	A10	700	227	2630	650	3500	110
Sahara	138,191	V6TD/3.3L	A10	700	227	2630	650	3500	110
GR Sport	145,791	V6TD/3.3L	A10	700	227	2630	650	3500	110
Sahara ZX	144,791	V6TD/3.3L	A10	700	227	2610	670	3500	110

LAND CRUISER 70

The 70 Series Cruiser has built a reputation as a load-hauler extraordinaire. Available as long-wheelbase Troopie or five-door, mid-wheelbase wagon.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
WorkMate Troopy	77,200	I4TD/2.8	M5	450	150	N/A	N/A	3500	130
GXL Troopy	80,500	I4TD/2.8	A6	500	150	2360	1115	3500	130
WorkMate wagon	75,600	I4TD/2.8	A6	500	150	2320	1190	3500	130
GXL Wagon	77,800	I4TD/2.8	A6	500	150	2300	1210	3500	130

LAND CRUISER 70 CAB-CHASSIS

Still the king of the country when it comes to a reliable workhorse. Safety updates and that steady 2.8TD with six-speed auto is a winning combo.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
WorkMate single c/c	76,800	I4TD/2.8	A6	500	150	2145	1365	3500	130
GX single c/c	78,800	I4TD/2.8	A6	500	150	2130	1380	3500	130
GXL single c/c	80,900	I4TD/2.8	A6	500	150	2130	1380	3500	130

LAND CRUISER 79 DOUBLE CAB

Tough-as-nails and with room for five, the LC79 dual-cab uses the 2.8TD engine backed by a smooth-shifting six-speed auto (for $2k less, you can opt for a five-speed manual).

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
WorkMate dual c/c	77,300	I4TD/2.8	A6	500	150	2205	1310	3500	130
GXL dual c/c	81,500	I4TD/2.8	A6	500	150	2185	1325	3500	130

HILUX

The N80 Hilux with a new 2.8-litre engine, six-speed transmissions and a beefed-up towing capacity. A facelift and more power for the 2021 model adds to its appeal.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
W'Mate Single c/c	40,965	I4TD/2.4	M6	400	110	1775	1225	3200	80
W'Mate Extra c/c	46,665	I4TD/2.4	A6	400	110	1890	1110	3000	80
W'Mate Dual c/c	48,735	I4TD/2.4	A6	400	110	1915	1085	3000	80
W'Mate Dual p/u	48,235	I4TD/2.4	M6	400	110	2045	955	3200	80
W'Mate Dual p/u	50,420	I4TD/2.4	A6	400	110	2045	955	3000	80
SR Single c/c	44,035	I4TD/2.8	M6	420	150	1795	1205	3500	80
SR Single c/c	44,590	I4TD/2.8	A6	500	150	1795	1205	3200	80
SR Extra c/c	48,695	I4TD/2.8	M6	420	150	1890	1110	3500	80
SR Extra c/c	48,250	I4TD/2.8	A6	500	150	1895	1155	3200	80
SR Dual c/c	48,510	I4TD/2.8	M6	420	150	1955	1045	3500	80
SR Dual c/c	50,660	I4TD/2.8	A6	500	150	1955	1045	3200	80
SR Dual p/u	52,455	I4TD/2.8	M6	420	150	2050	950	3500	80
SR Dual p/u	52,010	I4TD/2.8	A6	500	150	2045	955	3200	80
SR5 Extra p/u	60,250	I4TD/2.8	A6	500	150	2045	1005	3200	80
SR5 Dual p/u	60,676	I4TD/2.8	M6	420	150	2040	960	3500	80
SR5 Dual p/u	63,260	I4TD/2.8	A6	500	150	2045	955	3200	80
Rogue Dual p/u	71,530	I4TD/2.8	A6	500	150	2174	826	3200	80
Rugged X Dual p/u	69,990	I4TD/2.8	A6	500	150	2252	748	3200	80
GR Sport	73,990	I4TD/2.8	A6	550	165	N/A	N/A	3500	80

VOLKSWAGEN

5-year/unlimited km **www.volkswagen.com.au**

AMAROK

The second-gen Amarok shares much of its underpinnings with the next-gen Ford Ranger. Four engines are on offer in the line-up including the V6 shared with the Ford, as well as a 2.3-litre petrol.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
TDI405 Core	50,990	L4TD/2.0	M6	405	125	2185	1065	3500	80
TDI405 Core	52,990	L4TD/2.0	A6	405	125	2208	1042	3500	80
TDI500 Life 2.0	56,990	L4TD/2.0	A10	500	154	2242	988	3500	80
TDI500 Style	66,990	L4TD/2.0	A10	500	154	2271	1009	3500	80
TDI600 Style	70,990	V6TD/3.0	A10	600	184	2319	1031	3500	80
TDI600 PanAm	75,990	V6TD/3.0	A10	600	184	2319	1031	3500	80
TDI600 Aventura	79,990	V6TD/3.0	A10	600	184	2332	858	3500	80
TSI452 Aventura	79,990	L4P/2.3	A8	452	222	2228	872	3500	80

PLATINUM TO BOOST TUNDRA SALES

Toyota has added a new range-topping variant to its local Tundra line-up, with the Platinum joining the Limited model.

On sale now, the Tundra Platinum is listed at $172,990, a $17,000 increase over the now "base-spec" Tundra Limited which retails for $155,990 and first arrived in November 2024. It's a heavy whack to the hip pocket, but for that extra coin buyers are treated to a suite of interior and exterior additions.

Notably, the Platinum raises the stakes inside the cabin with new-look blue and black genuine leather trim; 10-way power adjustment for the front passenger; four-way power adjustment and massaging function for the front seats; heating and ventilation for the outboard rear seats; power steering column adjustment; a heated steering wheel; and a 10.9-inch head-up display.

The Tundra Limited features black synthetic leather upholstery; eight-way power adjustment; two-way power lumbar adjustment; and heating and ventilation for just the front seats. Both grades feature a giant 14-inch touchscreen; a 12-speaker JBL sound system; the full suite of Toyota Safety Sense driver assistance technologies; and cavernous interior space.

Both grades offer a braked towing capacity of 4500kg, as well as two towing modes, a manual trailer brake controller with 10 selectable adjustments, and a trailer back-up guide.

Both grades alsouse the 290kW/649Nm 3.5-litre twin turbo V6 petrol engine with a 36kW/250Nm electric motor, to deliver peak performance of 326kW and 790Nm. This runs through a 10-speed automatic transmission and part-time 4WD system with a dual-range transfer case. The Tundra is built on the same TNGA-F ladder frame as per the Prado and 300 Series.

PARTING PIC

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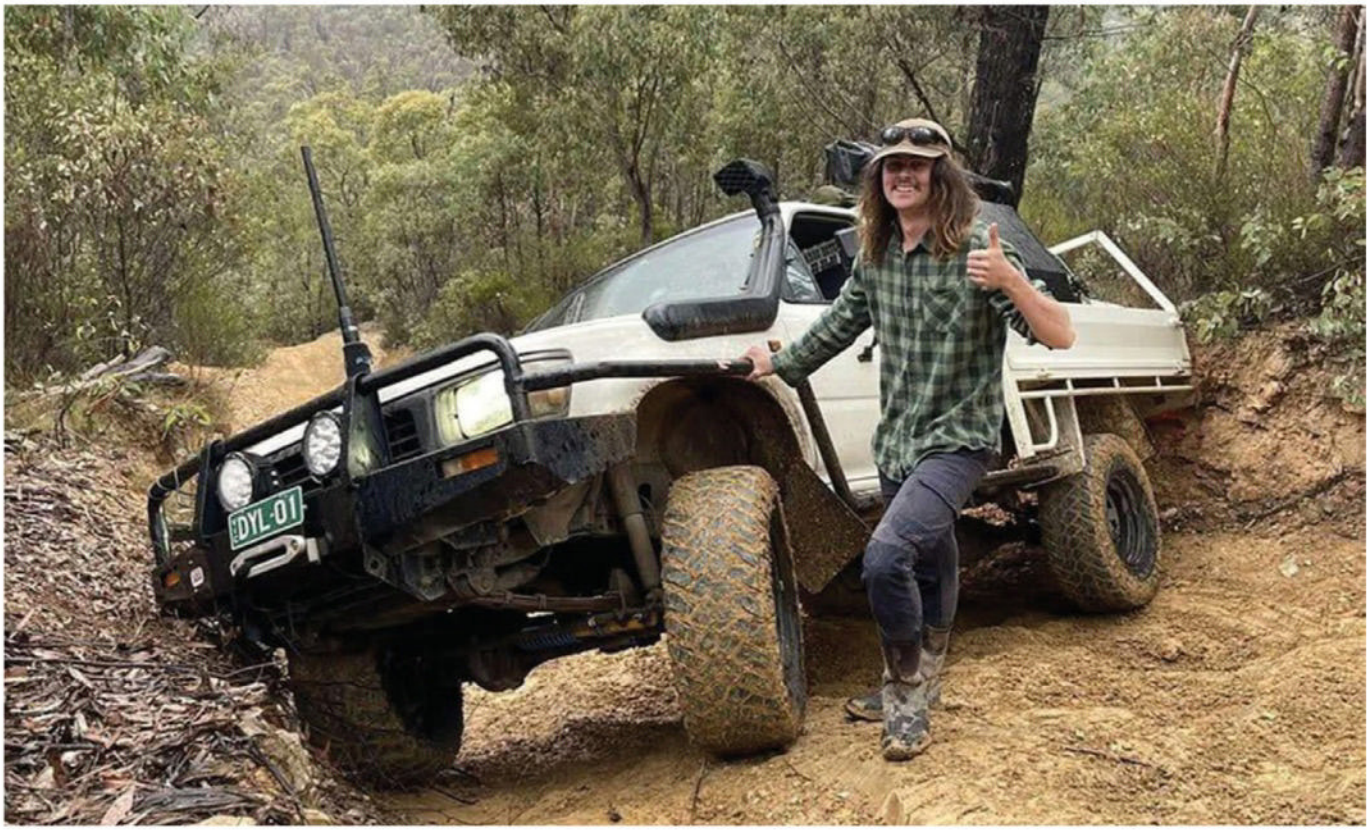


CLOSE CALL

DYLAN POWIS

> VICTORIAN HIGH COUNTRY, VIC

A High Country adventure almost took a nasty turn for the worst for Dylan Powis, when he nearly rolled his 1997 Toyota HiLux LN106 on a typical drizzly day in Victoria.

"I was basically going up a steep hill in the wet when I lost a bit of steering due to the front locker being on," Dylan told 4X4 Australia. "It was very, very close to rolling over."

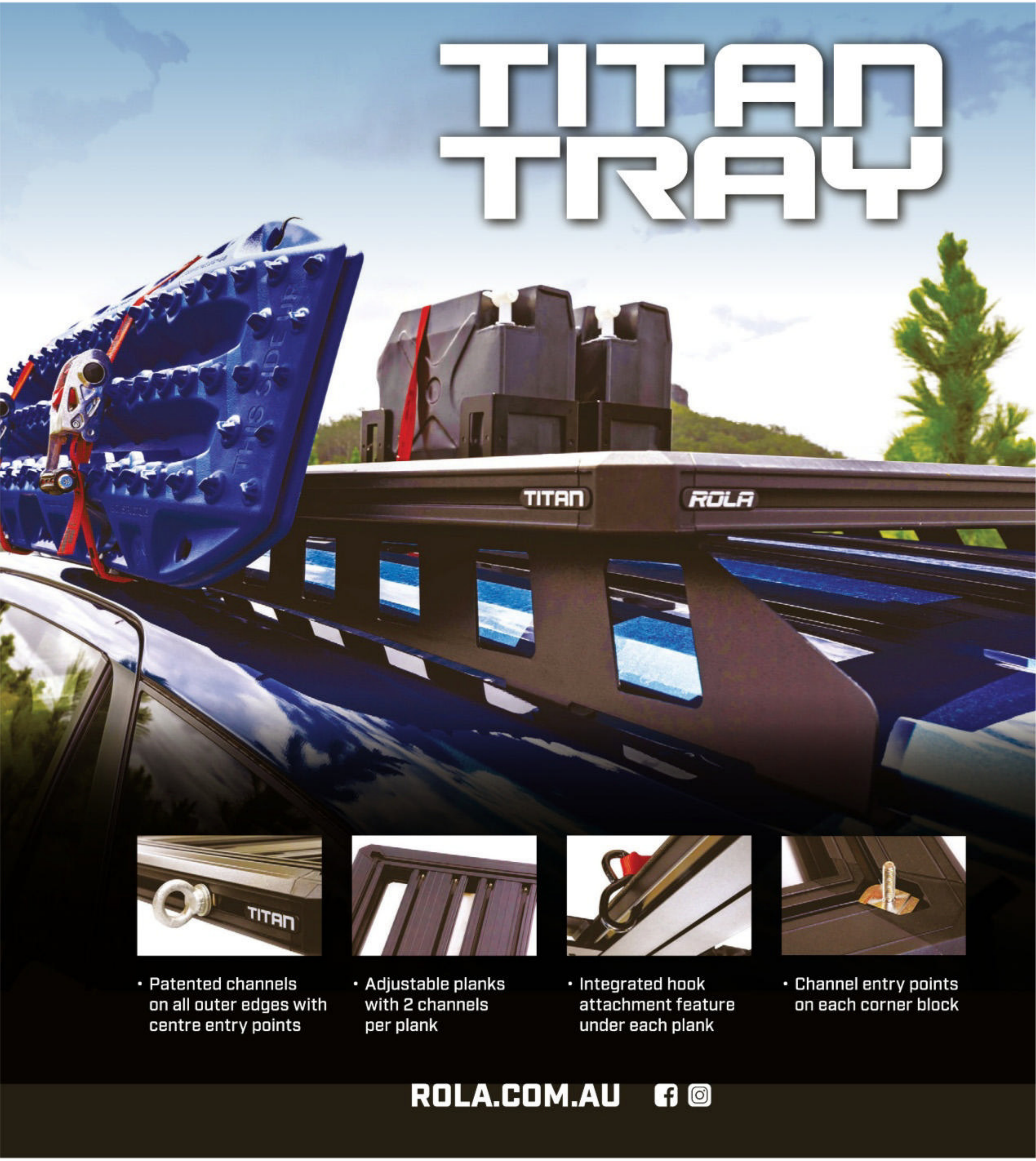
Dylan admitted that, in hindsight, he shouldn't have activated the front locker and sent the HiLux at full speed up the slippery slope. However, the incident allowed him to learn a lot that day about driving techniques in wet conditions. "I learned to just avoid that kind of stuff in the wet, and wait until it dries out to give them a go," he said.

The recovery was straightforward, with a simple single-line winch pull getting the HiLux over the hill. "I drove the rest unassisted, after changing my undies," Dylan added.

Dylan has had the HiLux for four years now and, with more than 600,000km on the clock, he reckons it's still going great. "It's done all of the Vic High Country, a big NT Red Centre trip, and outback NSW as well. Cape York is next year," Dylan said.

Let's hope it's not the wet season!

ROLA



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- Integrated hook attachment feature under each plank
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